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RECORDS OF A VOYAGE

TO THE

WESTERN COAST OF AFRICA,

IN

HIS MAJESTY'S SHIP DRYAD,

AND OF THE

SERVICE ON THAT STATION FOR THE SUPPRESSION

OF

THE SLAVE TRADE,

IN THE YEARS

1830, 1831, AND 1832.

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PREFACE.

THE principal objects in publishing the following Records are, to make known the horrors which attend the Slave Trade on the western coast of Africa, and the condition and mental capacity of the slaves liberated by our ships of war, and located at Sierra Leone; to expose some of the defects of the laws and treaties, having for their object the suppression of the disgraceful traffic in human beings; and to point out the additional sufferings entailed upon the wretched African as a consequence of these defects.

The Author has no pretensions to the character of a learned traveller, and

therefore has contented himself with a simple record of the observations which he made during his visits to different parts of the coast of Africa and its islands.

If this small volume shall add, however little, to the general acquaintance with the state of Western Africa, and tend to the exposure of the inhuman traffic in slaves, it will gratify the Author to think, that he has in so far forwarded the abolition of a trade so revolting to every feeling of humanity.

VOYAGE

TO

WESTERN AFRICA.

CHAPTER I.

On the 29th of September, 1830, his Majesty's frigate, Dryad, sailed from St Helens, for the western coast of Africa, bearing the blue broad pendant of Commodore John Hayes, C.B. recently appointed to command our naval force employed on the African station for the suppression of the slave trade,—that revolting traffic in our species, which continues, for the sake of pecuniary advantage, to stain with the deepest reproach, thousands of men professing acquaintance with the charitable and benevolent tenets of our religion.

Such conflicting statements are received in England, relative to this most unnatural commerce, from persons whose interest is concerned, and who are connected with a party, that to form

a just opinion of the manner in which the slave trade is carried on, and of the actual condition of those rescued from slavery and located at Sierra Leone, is a matter of almost insurmountable difficulty. But this we learn, amidst endless disputes and interminable volleys of vituperation, that the aboriginal inhabitants of Africa continue to be forcibly dragged from their homes; and, though sometimes, and but seldom, rescued from the grasp of their oppressors, are sold as any other commodity might be, and lorded over by their miscalled Christian brethren of creation, because, forsooth, their physical and moral perception has not been furbished by the chicanery and cunning of artificial society, and because, in them, the "human face divine" happens to be of a darker shade, and their facial angle less accordant with our ideas of symmetry and fair proportion.

Anchoring for a few hours at St Mary's, the largest of the Scilly Islands, for the purpose of obtaining a supply of fresh stock, we sped our way once more across the Golfe de Gascogne, as the French have it,—the Bay of Biscay, or, as it is distinguished in the navy, *par excellence*, "the Bay,"—

> Death's capital, where most he domineers,
> With all his chosen terrors frowning round;

and stood towards the Island of Teneriffe, which was seen about thirty miles distant, at day break, on the morning of the 26th of October. At dawn, its summit was enveloped in dense clouds of the purest whiteness, and as the day advanced, each mountain top, assisted by the solar influence, gradually divested itself of its fleecy nightcap, and, resplendent with brilliancy of light and shade, seemed just awake to the enjoyment of one of the loveliest days that heaven ever beamed upon the face of nature. Towering above every other pointed summit, the mighty Peak (12,072 feet high, according to Humboldt) was seen through a thin smoky haze, that seemed to surround it like a diaphanous garment of the finest muslin, shewing the outline of its figure, but hiding all deformity, its apex capt with snow. As we run along shore, scarcely a spot appears that is not destitute of vegetation, unless a scanty sprinkling of stunted shrubs, of a yellowish green hue, fringing the inaccessible cliffs, is to be considered so. The island resembles an immense cinder, universally black and irregular; while the reflected glare of the meridian sun, from many parts of its rugged, glossy, lava-covered surface, contrasted with the deep shade of others, shews as if it were still red hot; and one might almost imagine, that he hears it hissing in the wild foaming surf which surrounds

and lashes its base, and serves to perfect the illusion.

We anchored at Santa Cruz, about half a mile from the shore. This is the second town on the Island, Oratava being the capital. It has a very pretty appearance from the roadstead, all the houses being fancifully painted of a white, orange, or pink colour, and covered with red tiles—some of them flat-roofed, with here and there a garden, whose orange and banana trees afford a relief to the eye, after wandering over so large a tract of rugged waste, devoid of foliage. Defended by several batteries and fortifications, not in themselves remarkable for strength, Santa Cruz is memorable for the brave and successful resistance it made to the gallant attempt of our hero Nelson, who, in the conflict, lost his arm, and had very nearly lost his valuable life, in whose vocabulary, amidst all his mighty enterprises, the word "defeat" had never before been introduced. Two or three rather handsome spires rear themselves in different parts of the town. In La Iglesia Parroquia de Concession—the parochial church, which possesses the best of these spires—are still to be seen two union-jacks, the trophies taken from us on that occasion. They are pre-[illegible]d with the greatest care, and are pointed ou[illegible]ith much pride by the inhabitants: and I think there was no discomfiture encountered

during that eventful period, which we have less reason to regret, or concerning which we need less grudge our opponents a little innocent vapouring. The attack, defence, and subsequent capitulation, were alike honourable to both parties.

Behind, and to the westward of the town, for a mile or two, the country forms a gradual ascent, unlike the abrupt perpendicularity of that to the north-east; and the whole of this acclivity appears to be highly cultivated, and divided into numerous ridges, by low walls of loose stones traversing the slope, apparently for the purpose of preventing the soil from being swept away by the rains from the hills. The neighbourhood of Santa Cruz is by no means one of the finest parts of the island. Here are no vineyards, and as autumn is just over, and the rearing of barley and Indian corn being the principal employment of the farmers in the vicinity, the stubble of these only remains, interspersed with numerous prickly pear bushes; so that, were it not for the fruit trees in the gardens, and the bright sun, every thing would look bare and winter-like. On landing at the Mole, the first object which attracts the attention of a stranger, is the singular head-dress of the lower order of females. It consists of an oval shaped piece of flannel, half as large as a common shawl, broadly edged with white satin

riband placed on the head, with one edge as far forward as the brow, the two extremities of the oval hanging down as low as the middle before, and the edge corresponding to that on the brow extending down as far as the waist behind. Over this is placed a gentleman's common black beaver, or a coarse straw hat of the same shape. The aristocratical portion of the sex wear the same superstructure, but of finer material. To our English optics, a female attired in the *bona fide* head-dress of a male, must at all times appear a phenomenon, unless when matched with that preposterous unrolled bale of blue cloth, called a riding-habit; but when this same distinctive mark of the sex surmounts a head covered with flannel, it puts one in mind of the hags in Macbeth, and all their horrid incantations. Going along the Mole, we meet with camels and asses carrying heavy burdens in a sort of pannier, placed across the back; oxen yoked, and dragging ponderous casks on a triangle of wood, without wheels; and, as we proceed through the town, we meet the embrowned peasantry, with their loose shirt sleeves and inexpressibles open at the knee, mounted on mules or small slender ponies, with long goads in their hands, and their jackets thrown carelessly over the shoulder—rather a hardy, shrewd-looking race of fellows. The young children running about the streets also attract

attention by their squalid appearance and almost perfect state of nudity; a shirt being in general the only article of dress, and that so tattered and full of holes, that little attention to decency is exhibited in a covering so well ventilated. After leaving the Mole, and turning a little to the left, we enter the Plaza Real de Castello, rather a pretty looking oblong square, though on a small scale, having a handsome marble obelisk at one end, surmounted by a statue of the Virgin of Candelaria, the patron saint of the island, (an Italian work of art, erected by a devotee, and brought over here at considerable expense,) and a cross of marble at the other; its centre paved with flags, and surrounded with stone seats for the convenience of the lieges. The Mole, Plaza Real, and Almeida—a small public garden at the north end of the former—are the fashionable lounges. The garden is thrown open only towards evening, when the Iberian beauties venture out, after the sun has hid himself behind the mountains. The streets are of a very respectable width, extremely clean, and well paved. Cafés and billiard-tables are numerous, and the coffee and ices which they supply, by no means despicable. A hotel, kept by Mr Richardson, an Englishman, in the Caille San Jose, affords every thing which a brief occupant can desire; and what is wanting in some comforts, is made up by the

airiness of the apartments, so necessary during the hot season, and the neatness and cleanliness of the whole. Oranges, (which are not quite ripe as yet), bananas, melons, guavas, grapes, apples, preserved fruits, may be had here in great abundance and perfection. The bread is very good, and the beef and mutton tolerable. Red-legged partridges are very plentiful, and the ortolan may be had at a certain season of the year. Instead of shooting the former, the natives have a less expensive method of obtaining them. Towards evening, they observe where the birds perch, and, taking a covered lantern with them, they proceed to the spot after dark, and suddenly unveil it; the silly birds, dazzled by its glare, flutter round the light, and are easily taken hold of with the hand. The vegetables are very good, particularly the sweet potato and tomata, and every article of food is remarkably reasonable. The water is excellent, with which the town is supplied from a spring on the south side of a mountain, two or three miles to the eastward, by means of an aqueduct, formed of the pitch pine, supported the whole way by props of the same, so that it resembles, at a distance, a long and irregular paling. From being so long exposed to the sun's rays, however, the water is almost lukewarm when it reaches the town, but there is ice in abundance from the Peak to cool it with.

Santa Cruz is intersected to the westward by the bed of a mountain torrent, 90 or 100 feet wide; and some distance out of town, to the eastward, there is another very large gully of a similar description between the mountains, which may be seen from the anchorage. The body of water which rushes down these hollow channels during the rains, is sometimes immense. General Morales is the present governor of the Canary Islands,—a man of distinguished bravery, and celebrated for his resolute and pertinacious support of the Spanish sovereignty in America. His usual residence is at Santa Cruz; occasionally, however, making the circuit of the other islands, a system of government which might very well be adopted in our West India Islands; and, as retrenchment is the order of the day, might judiciously save to the mother country the salaries which she annually pays to a number of piddling governors. Ferdinand's wretched imbecile government is unable, or unwilling, to pay this brave man the paltry salary of 3000 dollars per annum attached to his appointment. He is at present fourteen months in arrears of pay, and in consequence cannot even accept of an invitation to dinner, as he has not the means of doing a similar act of courtesy in return. The country would be robbed to meet any demand made on the purse of this ignorant despot, for the

purpose of supporting some mummery of Catholicism, while a gallant and faithful servant, in the execution of an important trust, is allowed to live without the means of supporting his high character for hospitality, and his station as an officer of rank and a gentleman. How heartily he must despise, and how deeply deplore, being the servant of a government so utterly destitute of all that is good and great! The bishop's income is infinitely larger than that of the governor; and the numerous sleek and lazy priesthood who infest the island, and fatten on the loaves and fishes obtained by the hard won earnings of the industrious poor, are the cause of much murmuring and discontent among them. Patterns of religious practice and morality, and patrons of virtue, with extravagant incomes, are extremely rare. It is hardly to be expected that it should be otherwise, while they are supplied with ample means of obtaining every luxury, and gratifying every passion; and are, at the same time, utterly unacquainted in practice with the daily toil, penury, and adversity of the labourer. Their religious practice consists in set forms of prayer; their patronage of virtue in having their names conspicuously placed on the list of members or supporters of some benevolent institution, concerning which they know nothing farther than that there is an annual dinner

which they may as well amuse themselves by attending; and as to their morality, that may be left between them and their consciences. Like the poor Indian who planted a piece of iron hoop in the ground, expecting to reap, in due time, a plentiful crop of nails, the good people of Santa Cruz expect, among the higher classes of their clergy, a combination of things which are, without a miracle, incompatible, namely—rank, humility, riches, charity, ease, sympathy with the afflicted, luxury, self-denial.

The charge made by the authorities here on letters or newspapers arriving from England is enormous. Half a dollar is demanded, on delivery, for each single letter, and newspapers and packages sent to the post-office from packets or merchant vessels, are charged in the same ratio. This exorbitant claim is complained of very much by the few English residing here, but they have no remedy.

A great number of fishing-boats belonging to this island are constantly employed on the African coast. The fish they take consist chiefly of cod and bream, which, when salted and dried, form a principal article of food to the inhabitants of these islands. There is also a little trading carried on with the Arabs on the coast, for gold dust, &c.; but this being

contrary to law, is done "under the rose." The fishermen here make use of torches of pitch pine, by the glare of which the fish is attracted to their boats. Numbers of these appear every evening, like meteors floating on the surface of the water.

A stranger is surprised to find, that the Fringilla Canaria, which, for its sweet warbling note, we have domesticated in England, is here of a grayish-green colour, instead of the light yellow with which we should naturally expect to see it clothed in its own legitimate place of abode. I am told, that, in their wild state, the Canary birds have no song, and that it is only by domestication that they assume the beautiful straw colour, and acquire the mellow note which they possess to such perfection in England. There are only about 600 soldiers at Santa Cruz, and the greater number of these are militia. The aristocracy consist of twelve families, descendants of the original invaders of the island.

The air at this season is delightfully pure and dry; its daily temperature from sixty to seventy degrees of Fahrenheit; and I should think that the cool, salubrious climate of this island is at least equal to that of Madeira for convalescents, and those labouring under irremediable complaints, such as phthisis, had it but the same variegated

and cheerful scenery. Such may be found in the interior, but all is bleak and bare in our vicinity.

30th Oct. We sailed last evening. The easterly trade wind has wafted us so rapidly along during the night, that no vestige even of the lofty Peak is to be seen this morning. The startled flying fish, scared by every plunge as we rush through the water, are seen to emerge in vast numbers from their liquid element, flutter on a-head, or rush through the air from the vessel's side, for a hundred yards or so, and again to dip their glistening finny pinions in the wave, until our speedy course once more disturbs them in their lucid domicile. Numerous dolphins follow in our train, resplendent even under the whirling foam of our pathless track in the dark blue sea. Separated, as we now are, from every civilized country, to lead at the best a precarious existence under a tropical sun, on the shores of a continent whose very name is associated in every one's mind with disease, death, and slavery, and by us, who would not die the death of dogs, with all that is forbidding to those who love life, not for its own sake, but for the cognate hearts, the happy homes, and the cheerful society which we have left behind us, and exchanged for intercommunity with savages, dull looks, and gloomier thoughts, and the perpetual risk, at every step, of death from a poisoned atmos-

phere; many strange and somewhat appalling thoughts naturally present themselves to our imaginations. One while we are assured that a return is next to impossible, or, if our guiding star should be so propitious, it will be with impaired health: the choicest jewel of the casket will be lost. Again, hope, like a cunning juggler, intermingles with our darker thoughts, perverts our reason, and flatters us with the fond belief that all may yet be well. It is said that about one-fourth of the white population of Sierra Leone die annually. Fatal as its climate is, this statement is undoubtedly exaggerated. But the unvarnished account which an officer on board gives of it, who had once the good fortune to escape unimpaired from its baleful influence, speaks volumes. Grave as the subject must be, it is almost impossible to avoid smiling at the unique winding up of the sad history of almost every person he met with at Freetown.

Speaking of an intelligent gentleman who had gone out to fill an important situation in the colony, our conversation ran thus,—

"Well," said I, "he must be a most desirable acquaintance. You knew him before his arrival at Sierra Leone, I think you said?"

"O yes; our intimacy had been of some standing."

"How did he get on after being established?"

"Why I went to sea for ten days, and on my return called and found—that he had been buried nearly a week before!"

"You were describing the gentleman who went out as a missionary to be an excellent person. If any one thing in the world can make a man happy in his journeyings through life, it must be the consolation of having his wife and children always with him. Did they like the place?"

"I am sorry to say Mrs —— died, after a few hours illness, on the day of her arrival; and the rest of her poor family followed her within a week. The husband was the last, and death to him was a blessing."

In fact, the brief history of almost every poor devil, whether resident or casual visitor, is wound up by our friend with these words,—"He died one day." A mighty pleasant prospect we have here before us. But we are in for it; and as life is uncertain as an April day, we may as well enjoy the sunshine, and let the showers come when they will. And so we pass an occasional joke on the probability of what may occur to ourselves, and be said of us by some fortunate survivor:—

"What has become of B——? I don't see his name in the list."

"Poor fellow, he went out in the Dryad to

the coast of Africa, and died three days after his arrival."

"What a fool he was to risk his health in such a cursed climate."

"Why H—— was such a good humoured fellow that death surely had not the heart to choke him."

"It is a common remark that death always takes the worthiest and leaves the worst. He held on for some time, but finding the champagne very good at ——, he slept on shore one night, and that's quite enough you know. He died in forty-eight hours."

Jesting in this manner with the risk we run disarms it of half its terrors; but it is a sort of furbished and constrained courage, much of the same kind as that which men acquire by the abuse and ridicule of an enemy, whose power they are conscious of. Placing any foibles or peculiarities he may possess in a preposterous and ridiculous view, while they obscure or speak lightly of his irresistible strength and prowess, they acquire a sort of indifference or contempt for him.

6th November. We made the Cape Verd Islands yesterday. St Jago, along the eastern shore of which we are gradually advancing, at the distance of a few miles, with a light north-east breeze, has two or three alpine heights in the

nterior, resembling in their craggy perpendicularity those of Teneriffe; but in every other respect the islands have a totally dissimilar appearance. With the exception of these central mountains, the hills, which are numerous, progressively increase in height from the sea coast, appear of gradual and easy ascent, rounded at the summit, covered with grass and shrubs, much embrowned by the sun, and interspersed with valleys and declivities, rich with green foliage and cultivation. Numerous herds of cattle are brousing near the sea shore, where it is almost a level champaign for several miles.

We anchored at Porto Praya early in the afternoon. The town of Praya has a bare and wretched appearance. It is situated at the head of a shallow bay, on a prominence, bounded on each side by two low swampy pieces of ground, covered with cocoa nut trees, in one of which are to be seen some ruined buildings, which the marsh effluvia have probably rendered tenantless. On the same eminence, skirting the cliff in front of the town, stands a battery of twenty-six guns, or rather a range of guns, for the dilapidated embrasures, and the unserviceable appearance of the guns themselves, can hardly obtain for them the name of a battery; and the eastern side of the bay is flanked with a few pieces of artillery, without any raised work whatever. The country behind the town of

Praya has a very pleasing appearance. Its yellowish brown undulating hills, gradually increasing in altitude till they terminate in a lofty acuminated mountain, perpendicularly steep on one side, declivous on the other, called the Peak of St Anthony, resemble, in no small degree, many parts of the Morea.

The landing-place is on the right hand side of the bay, on some rocks in their primitive state, uninfluenced by the commodious agency of art. From this the road lies along the beach of ashes, instead of sand, bordering the low ground to the left of the town; at the termination of which you ascend a road, so called,—a rough cast path, narrow and full of asperities,—to the top of the prominence, on which stands the town of Praya, one of the most miserable places of abode for civilized human beings I have ever witnessed. The town is very small, consisting of a plaza, or square, in which there is a small church, and two principal streets extending from its north extremity, into which a few smaller ones open, and cannot contain many inhabitants, as the whole number on the island is only 12,000. The houses are small, whitewashed, and covered with red tiles, and, as well as the streets, are beyond description filthy. Innumerable pigs, goats, and asses, are constantly running about; and at every corner are to be seen men and women lying on the

ground, assisting each other to remove from their heads and bodies another sort of live stock, which appear to be exceedingly abundant. The black children, until the age of twelve or fourteen, have literally not a rag to cover them. Even in this small place, there are two jails, filthy confined receptacles, both of which appear to be full. Their wretched inmates, among whom were several Americans and two Englishmen, appeared to be of the most worthless description. The two Englishmen had been confined for mutiny on board a merchant vessel; one of them we took with us, the other was too unwell to admit of removal. The sickly season is just over, but cases of intermittent and remittent fevers are still to be met with. About a fortnight ago, fever was very prevalent, and every one has a squalid, sallow, unhealthy, death-like aspect. I am not surprised at it; for, to say nothing of the flat, marshy grounds on each side of the town, the corrupting filth about the streets is enough to contaminate any atmosphere. The Portuguese are proverbially dirty. I have had not a few opportunities of observing them, as well as the people of various countries, and the balance in my mind is greatly against them. It is singularly ludicrous to hear the inhabitants of this place, as well as the American Consul, who has been an exile here for seven years,

and is contaminated with all the local prejudices, lauding the salubrity of the climate to the skies, although he himself has lately risen unexpectedly from a sick couch, and although fever, in all its grades of intensity, was, but a few weeks ago, the inmate of almost every domestic hearth. When I asked how there were so many embodied skeletons, lank and lantern-jawed, moving about, and how it happened that so many of the officers of his Majesty's ship Tweed, which touched here about three years ago, died after sleeping a single night on shore, the answer was,—"It is all owing to excess, or to some peculiarity in the manner of life." The idea of climatorial or local insalubrity could not for a moment be entertained. These people are not unexampled in this respect: I have observed that the natives and naturalized of almost all unhealthy climates are similarly prejudiced,—a circumstance which might be taken as another collateral proof that the ratio of insusceptibility to the effects of a mephitic atmosphere is inverse to the length of residence. When our troops were dying by hundreds in Walcheren, the good Zealanders, educated as well as ignorant, scouted the notion of insalubrity, and tried to persuade the languishing *unacclimatés* that the damp air and noisome exhalations from their miry soil, canals, and ditches, formed the most

wholesome and respirable ether imaginable. The governor of the Cape Verd Islands resides here, in a house of the most beggarly description. He is a captain in the Portuguese navy, and has a few regulars and black troops under his command, whose appearance is by no means formidable. Underneath the windows of his hall of audience, the largest and best room in the house, or indeed in the town—which by the by contained, as furniture, six chairs,—there was a *magnificent* court-yard, strewed with straw, containing great numbers of hogs, poultry, and asses, and having in the midst of all a huge monkey, fastened by a chain and staple to the ground,—the whole making the most incessant, heterogeneous, and stunning noise that human ear ever listened to.

Fruit is very plentiful,—oranges, bananas, cocoa nuts, pine apples, and lemons. We were led to believe, from some printed authorities on board, that poultry was unusually cheap, but found them nowise remarkably so, although very plentiful and excellent, particularly turkeys. According to the same authorities, any thing might be had for old clothes; but we found the natives as apt at valuation, or rather depreciation, as any of the tribe of Judah in Rosemary Lane could possibly be. We must, of course, attribute all this to the march of intellect, to the travels of the schoolmaster, rather than to

any wilful misrepresentation. Numerous boats, technically denominated "bum-boats," the derivation of which radical appellative remains, I believe, still an enigma, bring alongside plenty of fruit, fowls, and eggs, for sale or barter.

A shark was caught last night, upwards of ten feet long. The monster had a liver of at least a hundred-weight. In his maw were found half digested lobsters, ribs of beef, and various other articles. Nothing affords a sailor more satisfaction than the capture of one of these pirates of the deep. Legitimate enemies of his, as well as of every other salt water animal, he cordially hates them as much as he does the sharks ashore,* and feels as much pleasure in cutting up the one, as he does in kicking the other. The American Consul, who officiates during the absence of our own in England, obligingly obtained for us all that we wanted of sea stock; and having received intelligence from this gentlemen, of two piratical vessels which had for some time infested the neighbourhood of these islands, we sailed to-day, (8th,) in search of them, glad even to exchange this Portuguese abomination for Sierra Leone, and all the risks and privations of the coast of Africa. As we run along shore to the westward of Porto Praya, the land begins

Land sharks, — Lawyers and their emissaries.

to lose its character of hill and dale, and becomes rocky, irregular, and full of ravines; and has every where its volcanic origin strongly marked.

9th November. We boarded a Brazilian brig to-day, 69 days from Angola, which, according to the account of the master, was bound to the Cape Verds for a cargo of salt. They had plenty of water, but their provisions being expended, we supplied them with sufficient for a week. The knowing ones assert, that she is one of those vessels which the merchants employ to bring over spirits, tobacco, gunpowder, cloth, &c. for the purpose of bartering for slaves—these on purchase being transported across the Atlantic in fast sailing armed vessels, or "clippers," as brother Jonathan would designate them. After discharging on the coast, these "trade ships," as they are called, usually make a run up here for salt, which is a commodity of some value in Brazil.

11th. We anchored at Porto Grande, in the Island of St Vincent, this evening, and obtained intelligence of four schooners having been here during the last three months, two of which, under the Spanish flag, appeared to be slave traders, the others, under French colours, possessing some of the attributes of pirates and answering in some measure the description we had received. The deputy governor here, Joaquim Ignacio Nobre, behaved in the frankest

manner, answering all our questions most unreservedly, and supplying information where ours was defective.

At the head of this bay, which is a most commodious anchorage, stands a ruined church, a custom house, and an assemblage of huts, which scarcely merit the name of a town. The country, full of crags and prominences, like the other islands, has evidently the appearance of a volcanic origin, but comprises some large valleys, which, although at present wholly uncultivated, through the indolence of its possessors, the Portuguese, might be rendered exceedingly productive. Even fruit, the rearing of which may be so easily effected in these latitudes, is an article of great scarcity. That which they do possess is principally obtained from St Antonio, one of the neighbouring islands. To those of us who went on shore, the natives were respectful, attentive, and hospitable. At home, hospitality is a subject much talked of, but little practised, unless in the most obscure districts, where usury in matters of benevolence is still unknown: There, such heartlessness is little felt, but to us, wanderers in a strange land, a hospitable smile is of the greatest value. Abroad, as well as at home, however, we often meet with men whose whole thoughts are concentrated in the pence and farthing column of their cash accounts,

among whom generous and liberal sentiment is a scarce commodity. Sordid parsimony is the load star of all curmudgeons of this class, and hospitality is a word seldom whispered within their gates; for covetousness withers the leaves of their better feelings like a baleful east-wind, or, like the adherent dross of an unsmolten metal, it obscures the lustre and impedes the usefulness of the precious substance to which it so tenaciously clings. Sailors possess a character for hospitality—an openhearted feeling of kindness, more eminently than any other class of men. "Schooled in adversity, and cradled in the storm," though generally strangers to each other, their circumscribed society, their manner of life, secluded and friendless, make them feel that mutual assistance and mutual good will are not mere virtues to be talked of, but actual duties to be performed. They have no selfishness: dependent upon each other for every comfort they enjoy, they are covetous of nothing but a character for courage, and tenacious of nothing but their good name. When on shore, eccentricity may be his characteristic; but disinterested liberality and benevolence, too often misapplied, are also inseparable peculiarities of a sailor.

13th. We sailed again early this morning, and stood toward St Lucia, where we anchored

about three P. M. This island appears about five or six miles long, flat to the southward, mountainous to the north-westward, and affords pasture for numbers of wild oxen and goats, and shelter for thirty or forty individuals, the greater part of whom come here from the other islands, at particular seasons, to prepare barilla. The soil in the valleys is sandy and alluvial, but there is not the slightest vestige of cultivation, if we except the situation of a few cotton plants, at one end of the only hut on the island. In this humble abode, they had bananas and Indian corn brought from another island, goats' milk, cheese, and turtles' eggs. One of their fishing boats arrived while I was there, and brought a great number of bream, rock-cod, mullet, and a species of gurnard; but the greatest want here, as at St Vincent, appears to be good water. I observed a well near the hut, but the water was of a greenish colour, and had a disagreeable taste and smell. Vegetation, as well as water, is so exceedingly scanty, that it is matter of surprise how such numbers of animals, horses, asses, wild oxen, and goats, can find sufficient articles of nourishment.

15th. The anchor was got up again this morning, and dropt at Port St George, in the Island of St Nicholas,—rocky, mountainous, bare, and uncultivated, like the two former. In getting under weigh, a poor boy fell from the

mizen-top, and was killed on the spot. Still unsuccessful in our search, we sailed early the following morning for Boa Vista, which we reached on the 17th, anchoring in English Road. Compared with the rest of the group, this island is flat, with here and there a hummock, or moderately sized hill; and, like the others, there is scarcely a tree to be seen, but I was told by Colonel Martinez, the Pôrtuguese Government agent, that the interior of the island is very fertile, and that much attention had been paid to its improvement. There are two small towns here, on opposite sides of the bay, neither of which have a very prepossessing appearance. In Boa Vista, the chief of these, however, a rather inviting sign—to wit, the "Union Hotel" posted in gigantic letters, in front of what appears to be the best house in the place—presents itself to the desiring gaze of the inhabitants of all floating prison-houses in the anchorage. The town will not bear a description. There are not more than forty or fifty houses in the place, and most of these rather merit the name of huts. I landed on the 18th, at the request of Colonel Martinez, on a professional visit to his wife, who is afflicted with a most painful disease of the eyes. I had many acknowledgments, of course, besides a present of a hundred-weight of coffee from his own plantation, in the interior of the island, which

could not be pertinaciously denied without the risk of offence. This person, I have since been told, is one of the most extensive slave dealers on the coast of Africa, having, it is said, with a relation at Havanna of the same name, more vessels employed in that facinorous traffic than any other individual. His property and influence in most of these islands is also very extensive.

The inhabitants of this island may be said to be one family, they are so connected with each other by intermarriage, or some tie of relationship. I think the colonel, who speaks English very well, and is a very intelligent person, said, that he could claim kindred with upwards of two hundred families, while many others of whom he knew little more than the name, might remotely claim the same with him.

On the landing-place there are immense heaps of coarse salt piled up, ready for exportation. It is obtained from salt springs, situated in a valley, a short distance inland from the town: here large superficial holes are dug, when the water oozes out very copiously, almost saturated with the muriate, requiring only a short evaporation to produce crystallization. Most of this is sent to Brazil. A large Bremen ship of 700 tons is lying here at present, ready to take in a cargo for Rio de Janeiro.

The militia of this island have a most unmar-

tial appearance. A short description of the town-house sentinel, placed, no doubt, as the best specimen previous to our landing, will be sufficiently characteristic of the body. He was a tall, stout black, carrying a rusty musket, having his head covered with an old straw hat; his body with a gray jacket, out at elbows, the sleeves too short for his long arms; coarse shirt of incalculably remote purification; and unmentionables of an unknown colour, and most perflated and cribriform construction; shoes and stockings *desunt*. The various hue of the rest of the military of the island, both in dress and colour of the skin, was not least grotesque.

The orchil (*lichen rocella*) or litmus, collected on this island, affords a revenue to the Portuguese government of from £30,000 to £40,000 per annum. The natives complain exceedingly of the infamously low price which they receive from the government agent, (who has six per cent for collecting, packing, and exporting it,) for this valuable lichen, although it is not the fault of the agent, but that of the government, which insists upon its being so low. As none of it is allowed to be exported but through the hands of these agents, (one of which there is in every island,) on government account, the poor peasant has no alternative but to accept what price may be offered. This is usually 40 reis (about twopence) per pound. A

quintal, which consists of 128 pounds, costs the government, including all expenses, about £5, and is sold in Lisbon for £50, so that it is calculated, that by the sale of twenty hundredweights of this article, the government has 60,000 dollars clear gain. Here is oppression with a vengeance! It is collected, too, with no small degree of danger, from the faces of rocks and precipices, over which the natives sling each other, much in the same manner as the fowlers of St Kilda. Every thing in these islands is monopolized by the agents of the mother country, who, being the only licensed purchasers, put whatever price they choose on all produce; consequently, as no competition in the market is allowed, the people have no adequate return for their labour, and continue in a state of beggary, while the government and its myrmidons become enriched by their industry.

The temperature of these islands is by no means oppressive at present. It is seldom higher than seventy-eight, or lower than seventy-six, degrees, and there is always a brisk breeze from the east-north-east, but the air is damp and clammy.

19th. We sailed again to-day, without obtaining any information relative to the object of our search, farther than that a Spanish schooner had attacked a French vessel of the same description in this bay one night lately, and

was beaten off. Where she had gone to since was uncertain. While at Boa Vista, we took on board a number of guns and an anchor, saved from the wreck of his Majesty's ship Erne, lost on the Island of Sal, in 1819. By the by, Colonel Martinez, slave dealer as he is, possesses a very handsome piece of plate, presented to him by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, for the protection he had afforded to the people and stores belonging to this vessel. The salver bears an inscription expressive of their high sense of his generosity.

The cruize we have had among these islands was quite unexpected, and I believe every one is heartily tired of it, and glad that we are at last on our way to Sierra Leone, without fear of interruption. The healthy season has already commenced there, so that we are too late to be "in at the death."

27th. To-day we are in latitude nine degrees twenty-five minutes, longitude seventeen degrees twenty-one minutes, one hundred and twenty miles from Orango Island, and about two hundred and fifty from Sierra Leone. I am so particular in thus stating our position, because, although Orango Island is the nearest land, every person on board is sensible of a very strong aromatic odour in the air, undoubtedly wafted by the breeze from the main or its islands, —an agreeable perfume probably like that which

we are told regaled the senses of Hanno, the Carthaginian Admiral, and his followers, during their voyage of discovery, upwards of two thousand years ago, although, I believe, it is disputed whether they were so far to the southward, or so distant from the land. The wind is north-east, blowing directly off the coast, and the atmosphere is damp and hazy.

We have been nearly losing two of the ship's company, from the bad effects of sleeping one night on shore, and inhaling (according to the spectral inhabitants) the healthful and life-giving air of Porto Praya. These two persons, a seaman and a boy, lost their passage on board in the last boat, on the evening before we sailed, and not being able to obtain one of the island boats to bring them off, they were obliged to remain for the night. Eighteen hours elapsed from the time they left the ship until their return next day, the 8th of November, in the forenoon of which we sailed. On the 18th, ten days afterwards, the boy was attacked with the endemial fever, in so high a degree of intensity, that his life was only declared out of danger to-day. He did not apply for medical aid until the 20th, and of course during this interval, the disease was making most rapid progress. On the 22d, the seaman also shewed he was labouring under the influence of the same poison, but he requested advice on the

first invasion of the disease, and by timely combating it with the most energetic measures, its violence was restrained, and its character changed into that of a common tertian ague; from which, however, he is still suffering, but in a mitigated degree, and free from danger. So much for the wholesome climate of Porto Praya, which, as I said before, is one of the most hateful human residences in the whole world.

29th. We are this morning within fifty miles of our destination. Great numbers of bats and small birds have been caught flying about the ship yesterday and to-day. In the morning two vessels made their appearance to windward, which proved to be his majesty's brig Plumper and a "*rakish*" vessel she had just examined, under French colours, from the Sherboro, with three hundred slaves on board, bound to Guadaloupe. According to the provisions of existing treaties with France, although found thus openly engaged in this flagitious traffic, she cannot be considered a lawful prize, and was consequently released. As by these treaties we are not permitted the right of search, no French slave-ship can be detained by us, or indeed by ships of war of any nation but their own; and as the French national squadron on the coast of Africa, although nearly as large as ours, possesses but little cruizing zeal, the trade is carried on under the white flag, now the tricolor, to an

enormous extent. The Portuguese and Spanish slave dealers, fully aware of this immunity, take advantage of the shelter which it affords, and obtain French papers for the ships they employ in the trade. Surely the French Government, which has enacted various laws expressive of its detestation of this inhuman traffic, cannot be aware of the disgraceful extent to which their flag is employed for its protection, or they would voluntarily grant the right of search and capture of all vessels found with slaves on board. But it is the general opinion here that they have never entertained a sincere desire to put an effectual stop to the odious traffic.

The commander of the Plumper came on board, and put us in possession of the proceedings of the squadron, and the *on dits* of the colony. He told us that a few weeks ago he went on service in search of slave vessels up the Rio Pongos, in consequence of which thirty-eight of his crew have been seized with fever and sent to the hospital at Sierra Leone, fourteen of whom died yesterday, and that he expects to hear on his return, from the state of those remaining, that they have almost all shared a similar fate. Upon inquiry, he stated that he took the brig a considerable distance up the river, that she was anchored so close to the shore that her yards almost brushed

the trees, and that on the fall of the tide the vapour arising from the slimy ooze on the banks was so dense, that one might, to use a common, but forcible expression, "almost have cut it with a knife." This officer also informed us that the Primrose, Commander Broughton, had captured a large ship, with five hundred and fifty slaves on board, called the "Veloz Passagera," mounting twenty long guns, after a severe action, during which the former had three killed and twelve wounded, among whom was the captain; the latter forty-six killed and twenty wounded, ten or twelve of whom died afterwards. The Conflict had also captured, by means of her boats, an armed schooner, called the Nympha, with one hundred and sixty-nine slaves, bound to Boa Vista, belonging to Colonel Martinez above mentioned. Here, too, the action was warm while it lasted, the Conflict's boats having eleven wounded, four severely; the prize fifteen killed and several wounded. It is the interest of the crews of these vessels to defend themselves to the utmost, as they receive no part of their wages, which is from thirty to sixty dollars a-month, according to the rank they hold, until their live cargo is safely disembarked at the destined port, when they have a certain number of dollars additional, according to the number of slaves landed alive; and in the event of capture they forfeit every

thing. I learn that the persons officially connected with the victualling department and courts of mixed commission at Sierra Leone, are talking of preparing to depart for the new settlement at Fernando Po. The greatest alarm prevails among them, for they dread the change beyond imagination, and consider Sierra Leone as a paradise in point of salubrity compared with their intended place of residence.

30th November. The name of Sierra Leone, or Mountains of the Lion, was given by the Portuguese discoverers in the fifteenth century to a small peninsular tract of country, situated about the eighth and ninth degree of north latitude, and thirteenth and fourteenth of west longitude; bounded to the southward by the Kates river and Sherboro, to the northward by the Sierra Leone river; on the southern bank of which, within five miles of its estuary, is now situated the British colonial settlement called Freetown. This mountainous district is to be seen this morning emerging like a series of azure clouds from the thick brick-dust coloured haze which seems to rest upon the horizon.

We have a very light breeze off the land, so that our approach to it is not so rapid as we could wish. The thermometer is not higher than eighty degrees, and the heat by no means oppressive. Were it not for the light haze

that constantly floats in the atmosphere, not mixing with it, but remaining suspended in it like a thin smoke, or like any spirituous fluid when poured into a glass of water that is motionless, the weather might be considered very fine. A pilot came alongside this afternoon in a small boat pulled by four hands, and was taken on board,—a stout black, six feet high, by name Prince Stober. How he became possessed of such a Germanic appellation I have not been able to ascertain. His various occupations are not less remarkable than his name is singular, as he, as well as others of the same amphibious tribe, directs the course of vessels into port during the week, and on Sunday pilots souls to heaven, being the pastor of a methodist conventicle; and he seems an intelligent person, very well fitted to instruct his poor countrymen in their religious duties.

CHAPTER II.

1st December. Freetown and its vicinity, from the anchorage which we reached a little after daylight this morning, has a most pleasing appearance, and notwithstanding that its climate is so pernicious to European constitutions, the most prejudiced must grant that the scenery here is magnificently picturesque. The wide confluence of Sierra Leone river with the sea, resembles a smooth and extensive lagoon, bounded on one side by the low, woody Bullom shore, on the other by the verdant and gentle acclivity on which the town is situated, the back-ground of which, gradually ascending, terminates in a semicircular range of moderate sized hills, forming a sort of amphitheatre, decorated with lofty trees and richly foliated shrubs; while every spot of the ascent, here and there studded with neat country seats, presents to the delighted eye a picture of the most agreeable character. The town covers a large space of ground; its houses appear from the anchorage like so many cottages ornée, elegantly built,

and tastefully painted externally, and interspersed with numerous trees; the streets wide; and—which, by the by, is rather ominous than pleasing—covered with grass, through which lanes are distinguishable, made by the foot passengers. The huts scattered about in the suburbs surrounded with banana, orange, pawpaw, and other fruit trees, put one in mind of the garden summer-houses of the honest Cockney citizens in the neighbourhood of London. But with all that is so pleasing to the eye, it is but a painted sepulchre. It is painful to the imagination to conceive that this very exuberance of vegetation is the remote cause of that great destruction of European life, for which the place is so distinguished—contaminating the surrounding atmosphere with mephitic exhalations by its annual death and putrefaction. On the ridge of an adjacent hill to the westward of the town, is situated a cluster of mud huts, the humble abode of a number of liberated slaves, and still farther to the westward, on the borders of the river, stands another assemblage of mud edifices, similarly inhabited. These villages are called Wilberforce and Murray.

I hear to-day that twenty-one of the thirty-eight fever patients sent to the hospital from the Plumper, have died, among whom is the assistant surgeon and the clerk; and the others are in such a precarious state, that little hope is

entertained of their recovery. The thing does not appear to create any sensation here: it is a matter of such common occurrence, that the subject is seldom spoken of on shore, or only mentioned *en passant.*

Numbers of boats and canoes formed of the pullam, a gigantic species of cotton tree, have paddled alongside to-day, full of black washer-women, liberated slaves, and Kroumen, all noisily talkative; the women well clothed with cotton garments of various hues; the latter free from any such encumbrance, excepting a piece of cloth that serves the purpose of the "fig leaf small clothes of our great progenitor." Some of them, indeed, are *in puris naturalibus*, but the ladies do not appear to be very much shocked at the indecency. Habit is a second nature, it is said, and perhaps blushes are incompatible with a countenance of ebony. They brought for sale bananas, oranges, lemons, and pine apples. The pines, though not so deliciously flavoured as those of English or West India growth, are nevertheless very excellent, and so plentiful, that sixty of them may be had for a dollar, or somewhat less than a penny each.

11th. The fine picturesque appearance which the town assumes from the anchorage is greatly diminished on entering it. It is placed on the side of a hill, situated in the arena, or bosom, of

the amphitheatre mentioned above. This hill is formed of a primitive brittle rock, that appears chiefly to consist of sandstone, and a combination of iron with oxygen, having a strong magnetic quality: of this several of the houses are built, but many more are constructed of wood, and all have quadrangular roofs, covered with small pieces of wood, which they call shingles, in place of slates. The ironstone of these, blackened and corroded by the frequent rains, has a very uncouth appearance, although a plentiful aspersion of whitewash appears to be made use of to hide the deformity. The wooden buildings, with chinks in the walls, and uneven boardings, although daubed like the others with colouring matter, and look well at a distance, are only a few degrees superior to the booths of a race-course or a fair; besides that they are not lasting, owing to the destructive incursions of a small and very numerous kind of white ant, which the natives call the "bug-a-bug." The houses are constructed on the principle of free ventilation; most of them being surrounded with covered galleries, open in front, or numerously perforated with jalouseed windows, or blinds of wicker work, to exclude the sun and allow the air to permeate. Most of these superior kind of buildings are unconnected with each other, being separated by a colony of small huts, inhabited by people of every shade, from straw-

colour to perfect jet, generally maroons. These huts are built of twigs wattled together round poles stuck in the ground; the interstices filled with clay, and the roof four-sided and thatched with straw or dry grass. Some of them are likewise formed of planks united edgewise, but such belong to certain of the black aristocracy only. The streets of the town are very wide, placed at right angles, and plentifully supplied with grass and rubbish. The soil is exceedingly hard during the dry season, and the red powder of the oxide adheres most tenaciously to one's nether garments moist with perspiration, daubing them most unsparingly with iron mould. During the rains, I am told, this hard soil becomes so soft and saturated with moisture, that if not very careful, one may step up to the knees in mud in every street of Freetown.

Each house has its garden full of fruit trees of various sorts peeping over the roofs and garden walls, reminding one of the green luxuriance of an English village in the month of May. A little higher up the hill, overlooking the town, Fort-Thornton, the citadel, or principal fort, is situated, with the military hospital behind,—which, by the by, might be in a much more elevated, and therefore more cheerful, cool, and healthy situation; and on the very summit of the hill stands the new barracks, commodious, clean, and well ventilated. A

place more eligible for their erection could not have been found in the whole neighbourhood. The temperature is usually two or three degrees below that of the town, and although the bay should be perfectly calm, there is almost always in this elevated spot a light and refreshing breeze. The summit of this hill commands the most superb and agreeable prospect imaginable in every direction but one, where the burying-ground presents itself, and the newly turned up mould which covers the recent victims to fever. The beautiful valley separating this from the semicircular range of woody hills in the back ground, forming a line of demarcation between the vicinity of Freetown and all that may be disagreeable to the eye beyond; the little villas peeping through the woods in rural modesty; the wide spreading town at our feet, embowered in trees; its spacious streets full of moving forms, dark, to be sure, but replete with life and bustle; and the still, expansive estuary, unruffled by a breath, bearing on its smooth surface ships of various size and structure, pilgrim specks from "regions most remote," —constitute an assemblage of objects highly pleasing to the eye and gratifying to the imagination. "All the grateful country breathes delight." If we could but add with Gay,

Here blooming health exerts her gentle reign,

the agreeable picture would be complete, but, merged in its fatal climate, all the beauties of the country are lost.

Freetown properly consists of several districts connected with each other by intervening huts, of which the residences of our countrymen form a straggling sort of nucleus. The inhabitants are composed, besides Europeans, of Nova Scotia settlers, Maroons from Jamaica, discharged soldiers of the West India regiments and royal African corps, natives, and liberated Africans; and each of these districts receives its name from the principal body of its inhabitants, —such as Settler Town, Maroon Town, Soldier, or Gibraltar Town, Jaloff Town, and so on. The greater number of the respectable inhabitants have low wooden boxes, somewhat resembling pig-sties, placed outside of the doors of their dwelling and storehouses, in which a Krouman or negro keeps watch during the night. These are remarkable objects in the street, and puzzle one not a little to guess their particular use. These transportable boxes are obtained from slave vessels, in which they are placed on the upper deck for the use of the captain and mate, when the cabin, hold, and every portion of spare room, is occupied by their living cargo. There is no scarcity of shops or "stores," as they are called, where almost every article of English manufacture may be had. The town

is also possessed of one solitary inn, and two billiard tables,—one at the inn, and a private one maintained by a few subscribers, whose complaisance enables casual visitors like ourselves to have free access to it at all times.

Numbers of Foulahs, Serawoolahs, and Mandingoes, tall, slender made, but athletic, and intelligent looking men, are seen walking, or sitting in groups about the streets, dressed in long loose coarse blue and white robes, having the arms and legs bare; their heads covered with a small red or white woollen or cotton cap; their hair platted in numerous cords, nearly as thick as the little finger, and hanging round the head; with sandals on their feet; and their arms and necks, and, in some instances, their ancles, loaded with numerous fetishes, *—gris-gris, as they call them, or charms. These are mere scraps of paper, written in Arabic characters, (pieces of the Koran,) and placed in small leather bags or boxes, which are fastened round the arm above the elbow, or round the neck, with straps of the same material, and resembling so many tobacco pouches. They have all muskets, bows, and arrows; some of them long sabres or curved knives, resembling creeses. The Foulahs and Serawoolahs bring gold from the interior in large rough rings, which they

* From the Portuguese word Feitiço, witchcraft.

barter for articles of dress, gunpowder, &c. The Mandingoes trade chiefly in rice and bullocks. One day lately, a number of these men, accompanied by a patriarchal chief, called Suttapha, or Mustapha, came on board to see the frigate. They inspected her in the most minute way; some of them extending their examination even to the main-top. That which seemed to afford them the greatest amusement was the cabin bell; the cord attached to which, in their examination of every thing, one of them chanced to pull, and hearing the effect, and not knowing from whence the sound came, every one had a pull in turn, and seemed highly tickled with the constant tinkle which their incessant tugs produced. The arrogance, cunning, and open perfidy of the gold traders is surprising. It has been the practice with the European merchants to employ a friendly Foulah, or Mandingo, to look out for the arrival of these people from the interior, and endeavour to prevail on them to sell the gold which they have brought to the merchant in whose confidence he is. While the negotiation is pending, which the traders take care to protract as long as possible, they live at the expense of the merchant, who has to provide them with a house, cooking utensils, mats to sleep on, and provisions. At length, after some weeks, if well treated, a bargain is struck; but if any thing displeases them—if

they fancy that they are not sufficiently well treated, they go to some one else, live with him another week or two, and perhaps play him a similar trick. From having been thus too much indulged, through the ill-judged rivalry and over-anxious cupidity of the merchants, they have become so proud and haughty, that they are generally able to dictate their own terms, which the original bargainer will rather submit to than suffer another to obtain the gold.

One thing strikingly remarkable in Freetown, is the total absence of beasts of burden, or carriages of any sort. To be sure, a milch cow is seen here and there grazing in the middle of the street, and a few goats, dogs, pigs, and poultry; and every respectable person keeps his own riding-horse or gig, (in lending which, by the by, they are extremely liberal to visitors;) but with these exceptions, I have never seen a domestic or working animal, or a carriage of any sort. The duties of the camel, horse, ox, mule, and ass, seem to be performed almost entirely by the individual or combined labour of our own species, and chiefly by the Africans recently liberated, who are to be seen in great numbers about the streets, almost in a state of nudity. I observed parties of these men, lately manumitted, dragging huge stones on low-wheeled trucks, for the purpose of building; others arriving from the country in the evening,

where they had been at work, clearing the ground, with hoes and pickaxes on their shoulders, all of them seemingly contented with their employment. Besides these men, parties of convicts, in chains, are constantly employed about any public work that may be going on,—black, as well as white men, who have been condemned for offences committed in the colony.

The female Africans all carry their children behind their backs, rolled in the same body-cloth which covers, from the waist downwards, their own nakedness. The poor little wretch, bound with its face to the back of its mother, and an arm and a leg on each side of her, and both these as well as its head exposed to the sun, seems to bear its irksome position, and all the shaking and rough usage it meets with, most philosophically. The market-place is crowded with liberated African females, squatted on the ground, or on mats, with their basket of fruit, nuts, or Chily peppers, displayed before them, and their naked, woolly-headed sable cherubs, released from their dorsal envelope, playing round them, and puckering their little, smooth, chubby visages into every form and degree of satisfaction. They sprawl about the narrow lanes through the market, scratching up the mud, and wallowing in it like as many black sucking pigs. At one time, in threading my passage through this labyrinth of baskets,

something called off my attention, and I accidentally trod rather heavily upon one of these poor little sooty imps, which set up a squeak very much like its sucking prototype; but being accustomed to hard knocks, and much ungentle usage, its grief vanished with that single scream. What with us would have kept the whole house in an uproar for an hour at least, only occupied the short space of a momentary squall, and the little thing brightened again as if nothing had happened, much to my gratification, as I imagined that I must at least have broken some of its ribs. Its mother seemed to think very lightly of the matter.

The market is large and centrically situated, and is held partly on the ground-floor of a large unfinished building, intended, I believe, as an Assembly Room, and partly in the open air, surrounded by wooden palings. At one end is the flesh, at the other the fruit and vegetable markets. The fish market is near the river side, and at a little distance from the others,—the whole filthy in the extreme. As is usual in most markets, the first of the morning is the best time to make purchases. The manumitted slaves, who chiefly supply the markets, arrive then from the different villages within six or eight miles of Freetown, bringing baskets of fruit on their heads, which is so plentiful, that they dispose of the whole load perhaps for

sixpence. Part of the fruit and vegetables are, however, brought over from the Bullom shore, supplied by a powerful chief, called Dalla Mahommodou, who also sends numbers of bullocks to be disposed of, and who has also a very principal share in the wood trade of the river. Besides various kinds of fruit, many other articles are placed on the ground for sale; such as pots of palm oil, —a most diabolical mixture of this oil and farina, used as an article of food by the blacks, coarse soap, yams, cassava, half-cleaned rice, green ginger, straw hats, fowls, and tobacco. The beef in the market is wretched stuff, and the mutton little better, although said to be the finest of the whole coast. The cattle are remarkably small: and all that I have seen are of a dun colour, with erect horns. Poultry and eggs are very small, scarce, and consequently high priced. Bread and milk we find to be the most expensive of all articles, a small roll, of the value of one penny in England, costing here threepence, and a quart of goat's milk nearly two shillings. The principal fish in the market are bream, gray mullet, garroupa, and rock cod. These are only to be had fresh late in the afternoon, when the fishermen make a point of arriving just in time for dinner. The unintermitting din of jarring tongues in this market is most deafening, and the peculiar sickly odour of black humanity, most potent

ınd disagreeable. One might imagine that he ıad got within the precincts of Lucifer and :he damned; that he saw all the fraternity of Beelzebub, heard the smothered howls of the ;ortured, and respired the sulphurous vapours)f the Tartarean abyss.

The water of Sierra Leone is excellent, and :he supply at all times sufficient for the con- ıumption; but, towards the close of the dry ıeason, it is so much less abundant than usual, :hat ships are sometimes obliged to supply :hemselves during the night, that the inhabitants nay not be incommoded. It is principally)btained from a large cistern near the Fish- narket.

The currency of Sierra Leone is a strange and nconvenient commixture of Spanish doubloons, —dollars rudely divided into four parts, each of ;vhich is called a "cut money,"—and the current ;ilver and copper of England. The cut money ıppears to be the most common medium of :irculation; every thing costs so many "cut- noneys."

Amidst all the dialects spoken by the various Negro tribes and inhabitants in the colony, English is the language generally understood ınd made use of, and in every degree of imper- ection. Poor Quamino, in giving utterance to)ur civilized dialect, falls into many diverting :rrors of style as well as pronunciation, and our

countrymen here seem to think that it is necessary he should not improve in this respect, as they all make use of the same defective and incongruous jargon in speaking to every one of dingy exterior, conceiving, no doubt, that the blacks understand better what is said to them when spoken to in their own broken and imperfect English. The following is a specimen of this peculiar *lingua franca* jargon, which I overheard the other day between a European master and his black servant:—

Master. "Why for you no take book to goberna man?"

Man. "Me no get him, sa."

Master. "Yes, you did; you get fum fum palaver plenty."

Man. "Me no like him, sa; me get fum fum palaver plenty too much."

Which means,

"Why did you not deliver that note to the governor?"

"You did not give me any note, sir."

"Yes I did; you shall be punished."

"I would rather not, sir, for I have had quite enough of punishment already."

To the westward of Freetown a level damp uncultivated piece of ground, of considerable extent, covered with almost impenetrable jungle, presents itself as a flagrant specimen of deficient circumspection on the part of the colonial

government. With the number of liberated Africans imported annually, nothing would appear to be more easy than the draining and clearing of this swampy spot, and the vicinage of mangrove and jungle, so as to impede the formation of those exhalations so destructive to health and life during the rainy months. There is, even at this dry season, frequently suspended over the site of this semi-paludal district, a white, filmy, tenuous haze, so dense in the morning that every thing which it envelopes, although it does not extend so high as the tops of the trees, is nearly hid from the sight, dispersing or expanding towards the meridian, and gradually collecting and condensating again as the influence of the sun becomes weaker and evening approaches. This can be nothing else than the noxious vapours elicited by the action of the sun's rays from the moist soil and the decaying vegetation.

In reference to this baneful exudation from the earth's surface, the following anecdote of Commodore B—— and Sir Niel Campbell, then Governor of Sierra Leone, related to me by a friend on whose veracity I can implicitly rely, deserves to be recorded. I must premise, that it occurred during the rainy season, when these exhalations are much more dense than at present. Sir Niel sent an aide-de-camp on board early one morning to invite the Commodore to

breakfast at eight o'clock, who excused himself by saying that he made it an invariable rule on the coast of Africa not to land before ten. The messenger went on shore, and speedily returned with another message from the Governor, saying, that as he was very anxious to see the Commodore, he had put off breakfast until ten, and that he had gone to take a ride in the interim. There was no refusing this; and the cautious officer inquired in what direction Sir Niel rode. "To the westward," was the reply. "Then," said he, "I shall perhaps be able to shew you why I do not leave the ship before the day is well advanced." The road which the Governor had taken was at that time nearly parallel with the beach, by King Tom's Point, and only a short distance from it. Commodore B—— took the aide-de-camp to the gangway, and after looking a little time, pointed out to him the Governor's course by his hat and feather, the last of which was distinctly visible, waving over the sheet of mist which covered the ground, himself and his horse being completely enveloped in it. The young soldier expressed great astonishment at the singular phenomenon, and said he was sure that no one on shore was aware of the existence of so dense and dangerous an envelope. Not long after this Sir Niel Campbell fell a victim to the climate.

The habitations of the Krou people, Krou

Town as it is called, are, in the direction of this spot, adjoining Freetown, a complete Indian village; the houses formed, like all the huts in the colony, of clay, twigs, and thatch. These men are an emigrant and industrious race, natives of a part of the grain coast, in the neighbourhood of Cape Palmos, about three hundred and fifty or four hundred miles south-east of this, who come here for a few years only—let themselves out for hire to ships or as servants on shore—make a little money—return home again, and are succeeded by some more of their fortune-pushing countrymen. They are, in fact, the Scotsmen of Africa. They are a remarkably strong, active, hardy, and intelligent race of men. Their skin varies from a dark copper colour to black, tattooed about the face, chest, and arms. They are distinguished by a tattooed arrow on each temple, with its point to the eye; and almost all of them have the front teeth of the upper jaw filed to a point, or some portion of each tooth removed, according to the fancy of the wearer, or those who begat him, which gives them a savage appearance. Their only article of dress is a piece of printed cotton cloth round the middle. None of them have their wives and families here; these are left at home under the guardianship of their own relations and the protection of their chief, to whom, on

returning home, they always carry a present of cloth, muskets, gunpowder, or some article of dress, as a sort of tribute and acknowledgment for his protection. Polygamy is permitted in their own country. They come up to Sierra Leone in canoes of different sizes, but generally return in any merchant vessel that may be going to pass in the vicinity of Cape Palmos; the quantity of goods which they take with them, purchased by their industry, being generally too much for their shallow barks to carry. The passage back is, however, occasionally made in canoes. A tribe called Fishmen, who inhabit the sea coast to the northward of their country, and with whom they have frequent wars, often lie in wait for them on their passage, and rob them; and, if I may believe the Kroumen, who seem to hate these people most cordially, the most bloody rencounters sometimes take place between them. Every ship of war, on arriving here, (Freetown,) enters a certain number of these Kroumen over and above her compliment, for the purpose of manning her boats when they may be sent on any service where there is likely to be much exposure to the sun or rain, and to the mephitic exhalations from the soil, such as wooding and watering, so that our unassimilated seamen may be subjected as little as possible to the deleterious influence of the climate. They continue on board the ship

until she leaves the station, when they are paid and discharged. One of the number is always considered the chief, or leading man, and is generally rated as a petty officer, the others as ordinary seamen. Sometimes there are two leading men; in that case the second is rated an able seaman, or has a second class petty officer's rating. They are much attached to the naval service. As the orthography as well as the pronunciation of their original proper names would be, to our tars, matters of incalculably difficult accomplishment, either they or some diverting vagabond on shore has supplied all of them with most comical and ridiculous appellations of English construction, by which they appear on the ship's books, instead of the proper names which have been bestowed upon them in their own country. We received upwards of twenty of them on board, chiefly young men, all of them more muscular and athletic, although not generally taller, than our own people; some of them perfect models in point of figure, and possessing features rather more prominent and expressive than the generality of Africans. Nearly all of them had been in the navy before, and, like most other Africans, each has his grigri, or fetish, which is commonly the tooth of some wild animal, fastened round the ancle or wrist. The following are a few of their original proper names, with the laughable and

absurd cognomina which they brought with them, among many others of strange and dubious import:—

Namboe	Jack Ropeyarn.
Tabooa	Jack Fryingpan.
Yiepam	Great Tom.
Woorawa	Peas Soup.
Blattoo	Will Centipede.
Nieca	Jack Neverfear.
Niepa	Jack Toggle.
Ba Sidi	Tom Seedy.
Niaie	Government Packet.

In rowing they have always a song of some sort or other at command, to which they keep time with the oar, sometimes melodious, but usually harsh and untuneful, having generally for its subject something connected with the ship, or the officers, or the duty that is going on, each chanting a subject in turn, while the rest join in the chorus.

Although enemies to the slave trade, these people are complained of by the Europeans on shore for their thievish propensities, and their "resetting" of stolen goods, which, if valuable, they pack off in canoes to their own country long before a hue and cry can be raised, so that few stolen articles of value can be recovered. They encourage the apprenticed slaves to steal from their masters whatever they can lay their hands on, particularly articles of dress, for which they give them some trifling payment,

as may be supposed, by no means equivalent to their value.

In Freetown there are two government schools, on Bell's system, for the education of black children of every race, Maroons, Settlers, and liberated Africans. In the male school there are at present three hundred and eighty-five pupils, divided into ten classes; in the female school, two hundred and sixty-four, into eight classes. The boys are taught reading, writing, and arithmetic only,—the girls, besides these, are instructed in needle-work. Every attention seems to be paid to their instruction; and, besides being remarkably clean, neatly dressed, and well-behaved, the progress they have made in these rudimental branches of education deserves the highest praise. I examined several classes in each school, and studiously compared the acquirements of the liberated African with the other children. There was no perceptible difference. The lights and shades of intellect seemed to bear much the same proportion among them, as among the children of our own labouring classes at home. For the age of these children, their progress, under the system of education adopted, seemed to be very rapid. With the infant establishments, fast gaining ground at home, and other improved methods of educating youth,—"of teaching the young idea how to shoot," the high road to knowledge

is now so divested of asperities, and, as it were, "Macadamized," that much ought necessarily to be expected from the rising generation, even of the sadly traduced blacks. A child now, before it can well utter its first monosyllables, is made to receive instruction, both physical and moral; and sundry rude applications of birch or leather *a posteriori* in the old school militant, have given way to coaxing and kindness in the new method of discipline, which, I think, for the sake of contradistinction, may certainly be called the school mellifluent. In the case of the school at Freetown, however, this system appears to work well.

Freetown church, situated near the middle of the town, after having cost government an enormous sum of money, (from £50,000 to £80,000 I hear,) has been at length discovered to be too large, and is at present undergoing material alterations, so as to reduce its capacity. It is, therefore, no longer a market-place, as Lander states it to have been, in his Records of Clapperton, "where buyers and sellers were indecently disputing and wrangling." There is, however, no scarcity of Methodist chapels and meeting-houses in the place; and almost all the villages possess some residents attached to the Church Missionary Society, who, with the managers and sub-managers, perform the municipal duties of each, and who, by their strenuous

exertions in the cause of morality and religion, have all along been extremely unpopular among the dissolute Europeans, who again affirm that their salacity exceeds all bounds, and that their religion is maintained merely in its trappings, which they doff at pleasure. A strong instance of moral turpitude has recently occurred among these men, which has caused no inconsiderable degree of exultation to their lay brethren, whose peccadilloes they sometimes magnify into heinous offences, and who, consequently, think and speak as most other men, "of carnal minds" would do under similar circumstances. "The *office* of a clergyman," say they, "must at all times command respect, and we are induced to respect the *man*, when his demeanour is compatible with the office, and his life irreproachable. But when a parson, merely because he is a parson, ventures to assume any arrogant degree of superiority over his lay brethren, and holds them up for petty offences and imaginary misbehaviour, as stained and branded with the mark of the Beast, as if he himself were spotless, he must, of course, expect to meet with the ridicule, the pity, and contempt, which such a supercilious, unwarrantable, and unchristian-like assumption deserves, let his conduct in other respects be ever so irreprehensible in our eyes. It is the duty of a clergyman to remind us of our faults, and to tell us to correct them,

and how to do so; but it is a weakness in the poor man to think himself, as he often does, in any way better or superior, because it is part of the duties attached to his holy office to do so. Such conduct must at all times appear a most farcical superlation of his own professed excellence, and will always meet with disgust and contempt from the unreclaimed and ungodly, and compassion from his more sensible brethren; the former of whom are very naturally inclined to exclaim, like a certain graceless toper, of sack-drinking notoriety, 'Because thou art virtuous, shall there be no more cakes and ale?'" The missionaries have, until the occurrence in question, superintended the instruction of the liberated Africans located in the different villages in the Peninsula. During the week, they assemble the children in the churches, and teach them to read and write, and to perform various religious exercises, such as singing church melodies, &c. They have, of course, access to every house; and in the mentally debased condition of the newly imported Africans, virtuous scruples are so rare among them, that the vicious will find few obstacles to the gratification of any immoral propensity, particularly when it is masked by religion. Mr D——, "the fallen star" alluded to, was in the daily practice of inculcating moral and religious instruction upon the minds of children, as well

as those more advanced in life. His wife and family were living with him in the town when the criminal circumstance alluded to took place, —namely, the seduction of a young English female, who speedily disclosed his villainy. Had it been an African, the occurrence would never have been discovered; and where the tendency to crime has been so manifested, and the facilities of commission so extensive; to what conclusion will a consideration of all the circumstances naturally tend? On the affair being discovered, he threw up his situation; and what makes the matter still more extraordinary, he was countenanced by his brethren, several of whom refused to perform their duties in the schools any longer. The world would be inclined to conclude from this, that they are equally guilty, and afraid of an officially instituted inquiry, and the criminal discoveries to which such an inquiry might possibly lead. But, among the most immaculate there will be occasional slips, and, for all this, there are many good and valuable men among them.

During our stay here, among other liberated African villages, I visited Kissey, situated about four miles to the eastward of Freetown, on the side of a gentle acclivity, about a mile from the river side. There is an excellent road to this village, and Wellington, situated a little farther on, winding round the base of those lofty moun-

tains behind Freetown, here still embellished with rich foliage, and diversified with valleys and ravines, clothed in the gayest manner imaginable. On the left hand, the wide, still, and expansive river is seen at a little distance, slowly stealing towards the sea. All between the road and its sloping bank is covered with long grass, yellow with the sun, appearing like ripe corn, waving in the gentle breeze, interspersed with groves and solitary trees, and the straggling, thatched huts of the manumitted slaves. The base of the hills on the right is embraced by several European villas and farms, well laid out, and ornamented with hedgerows of pine apple plants, which grow wild here in every direction; and close to the road, on both sides, throughout its whole extent, numerous cottages are placed, each surrounded by a piece of well cultivated ground, full of cassada, cocoa plants and fruit trees, and hedged in, and ornamented with several kinds of creeping plants,—the residences of liberated Africans, who have been some time in the colony. About two miles from Freetown, between this road and the river, there is a large piece of ground laid out as a race-course, for the annual amusement of the sporting heroes of the colony, but occupied every evening at this season by the European Ascii, who ride or drive to this spot towards sunset, and lounge about in the cool, refreshing

sea breeze, for an hour or two before dinner. All are on the *qui vive* at present, as the races take place a few days after Christmas, and nothing is talked of but training, betting, and horse flesh. Where there are so few bright incidents to illuminate the gloomy aspect of time as at Sierra Leone, a period of excitement like this is naturally looked forward to with anxious satisfaction. Every one is discussing the merits of his own, or some other steed, and, unacquainted as the Leonese must be with the systematic insidiæ of the turf, I can learn there is not a little jockeying going forward by the "knowing ones," even here. The horses, most of which are brought from the Gambia, are very small, and generally in bad condition—something of the same breed as Don Quixote's mare. None are thorough bred, and few are of any value. As they are all kept for the common purposes of riding or driving, and none exclusively for the turf; we ought not to ridicule the hack-like appearance of those about to be entered, nor the zeal which prompts the lieges to speak of them with admiration, because they are the best; and we know that all things—horses as well as men—are measured by comparison; but a technical description of the Sierra Leone stud, to which I am incompetent, would, I have no doubt, afford no small diversion to the connoisseurs of Ascot and Newmarket.

On approaching Kissey, the only striking objects which present themselves are the church, a large unoccupied government house, and two or three other civilized looking buildings, residences of the liberated African manager, and a few missionary assistants. All the rest has the appearance of a complete Indian village, the huts, peeping through groves of plantain and banana trees, formed of poles stuck in the ground, interwoven with twigs of mangrove, after the manner of a basket, the crevices filled up with clay, and the roof thatched with rank meadow grass. They are separated from each other by the pieces of ground allotted to each inhabitant, and by streets of respectable width; and consequently, although the whole contain only from eight hundred to one thousand persons, they are scattered over a very considerable extent of surface. All the liberated African villages in the colony are very similar in appearance. Of these, Regent's Town, in the mountain district, about three miles from this, is considered the finest. In the yard attached to the government house, there is a range of low buildings appropriated to the purposes of an hospital, for the reception of manumitted slaves, at present under the superintendence of the colonial surgeon. Here all cases of difficulty and danger are sent from the other villages; yet, although the patients

appear to be judiciously treated, and cleanliness strictly attended to, humanity obliges me to say, that the place is, both from its size and situation, altogether ill adapted for the purposes of an hospital. It consists of three very small apartments on the ground floor, one of which is appropriated to females, the care of whom is consigned to female nurses. Into these are huddled seventy-nine sick persons; and I was told that there had been occasionally as many as one hundred and fifty, afflicted with various diseases; for it would be both a useless and difficult matter, where the accommodation is so scanty, to attempt any separation or classification of the cases. But every thing appears to be done for their comfort, so far as the limited accommodation will allow; and it is for the colonial government to appoint a receptacle, of which there is no scarcity, at least in Freetown, (and there can be no very cogent reason against this being the site of the hospital, but there is a strong argument in favour of it, as the superintending surgeon resides there,) more suited to the wants and necessities of our afflicted fellow-creatures, although they are black and wretched. The diseases in the hospital were chiefly frightful phagedenic ulcers, dropsy, tabes, and craw-craw, —an eruptive complaint, of the nature of an inveterate itch, forming scabs, somewhat resembling those of tinea, and affecting the skin about

the elbow and knee joints principally. Some of the poor patients were so much emaciated, as to make it really a matter of surprise that objects so deplorable could still retain life. Two females, who had been slaves on board the Nympha, when captured lately by the boats of the Conflict, were among the number. They had accidentally been severely wounded during the scuffle which ensued on boarding.

I cannot help shuddering when I think of the dreadful and undeserved calamities, which are the bitter inheritance of these poor, inoffensive, suffering, and degraded blacks. At a short distance from Kissey, near the river side, a few huts have been erected, and surrounded with a wall, (not yet completed,) intended as a lazaretto, for the reception of all cases of an infectious nature, brought to the colony in newly captured slave ships, and for the temporary residence of the whole living cargo, should any epidemic prevail among them. Vessels may anchor near the spot, and land their unhappy inmates without difficulty.

In one of my excursions to this village, I dined with the government surveyor, who has "pitched his tent" here for a short time, being employed in completing an elaborate survey of the whole colony; and I may take this opportunity of paying a tribute to the civil endeavours and hospitality which we have met with at the

hands of several of our countrymen in Sierra Leone. It is our own fault if we do not take advantage of their numerous invitations. Every endeavour is made to afford us some means of passing the time, and dissipating the ennui which weighs upon our spirits, in this vapid and enervating climate; for, although the present is the most healthy month throughout the year, (August being considered the most unhealthy,) yet the debilitating atmospheric influence on mind as well as body, is sufficiently perceptible in the great disinclination to exertion of any sort; and in the peculiar sense of weakness in the knees,—general lassitude and weariness in the legs, without exertion, almost amounting to pain, with which every one is well conversant, who has resided for a short time in this region of pestilence and death. Unless when the wind blows from the eastward, called the harmattan —a dry, cold, parching breeze, usually lasting two or three days—the air is always highly charged with moisture; a very heavy dew generally falls at night; every thing becomes mouldy, and smells musty, and salt particularly indicates the damp saturity of the atmosphere, by becoming a moist and viscous paste. The violent changes in the condition of animated nature, as well as inanimate matter, effected by these atmospheric vicissitudes in the dry season, joined with intense solar heat, must be eminently

injurious to every constitution not habituated to their influence,—to say nothing of the still more pernicious effects produced during the almost incessant rains between May and October.

During my visits to Kissey, I occasionally entered the church,—a large unfinished building, capable of containing nearly one thousand persons, while the negro children were singing, at the pitch of their shrill voices, a diurnal song of praise, superintended by a black missionary assistant, belonging to the village. When I entered, they, of course, all looked round and smiled, but continued, with open mouths and teeth of ivory, to scream their canticle to the end of the verse, when all was hush, and, at a given signal from the teacher, a hundred little voices squeaked "Good evening, sir," repeating the salutation two or three times. As my visits were always accidental, the children were, of course, quite unprepared; and I cannot speak too highly of the progress they appeared to have made in reading and writing—of their clean and neat appearance, and the intelligent smiles of health, pleasure, and curiosity, that beamed from every countenance. In the discipline of these village schools, however, so far as I could learn, there is too much time lost in singing psalms and hymns, the greater part of the day being passed in this exercise.

The view from the upper part of the rising

ground on which Kissey is situated, embraces some beautiful and striking objects. The Lion mountains are just above us, clad with trees; the wide spreading village lies at our feet, adorned with every green plant which the country produces: beyond this, the river expands —a placid, silvery stream—the meanderings of which are to be seen, with its low, variegated islands, and the flat and woody Bullom shore, skirting its northern bank, as far as the eye can reach. At present, there are no fewer than fifteen or twenty ships in this, the Mellacorēē and Scarcies rivers, embarking cargoes of timber for England, and almost every week adding one or two to the number. The trade of the colony employs about fifty thousand tons of shipping annually. Since the suppression of the slave trade in these rivers, that system of vassalage and enlistment, under the banner of a chief, which was so necessary for personal protection during its continuance, has ceased to exist; and the sun of freedom having poured his benignant and fertilizing influence on the desecrated soil, industry has been fostered, and every description of improvement has made rapid progress among the native tribes, in the vicinity. The wood trade commenced in 1816, under the auspices of Mr M'Cormack, a respectable merchant of Freetown, who, by much labour and perseverance, taught the native Bulloms

and Timmannees to cut down the stately, ancient monarchs of the forest, and prepare them for transportation to another land.

The untaught savages at first laughed at him, and even the Europeans at Freetown considered his attempt as a wild scheme; and nothing but the greatest exertions could have overcome the difficulties he had to encounter in the prejudices of the natives, the want of beasts of burden, of carriages, or roads of any sort, by which to convey the trees to the river side. Perseverance, however, surmounted every obstacle, and the timber trade of this colony has so rapidly increased, that the annual duties on the importation of it alone amount to a very considerable sum, I believe about £20,000. The wood, which is commonly called African oak or teak, from the resemblance it bears to them, although it is in some measure different from both, is now floated down the river in rafts, and deposited in factories, as they are called, or storehouses, erected in convenient places on the different islands, or on the main, to be in readiness for embarkation. Vessels, previous to going up the Sierra Leone river to take in a cargo, discharge their ballast at a spot near the Bullom shore, a little above Freetown, called from this the ballast ground. Their stay up the different rivers is sometimes longer than perhaps there is any occasion for, in consequence of which the crews suffer dreadfully

from fevers of the most violent and irremediable nature. There is at this moment (22d Dec.) a bark in the Mellacorēē whose decks have been completely swept by a pestilential fever, leaving not a soul alive on board. Speaking of *this*, I may finish the sad history of the people belonging to his Majesty's brig Plumper: Only eleven of the thirty eight have survived, and these are so enfeebled and emaciated, that their restoration to pristine health and vigour must be very far distant; and as their health can never be re-established in this climate, they are to be sent to England by the first ship. I frequently visited those remaining alive after our arrival at Sierra Leone. They all laboured under the usual symptoms of that disease vulgarly called yellow fever, as it appears on this coast, *i. e.* of a more typhoid form than the West India disease. There are, no doubt, shades of difference between this and the scourge of the Antilles, but I believe them to be essentially the same. The mercurial treatment was adopted in all the above cases, and the potent drug was most unsparingly poured into the system in every shape. The final result affords a lamentable but decisive illustration of the inefficacy of mercury as the only remedial agent upon which reliance can be placed in this disease; but strange as it may appear, with even this glaring instance of failure before their eyes, several of

the medical men here, from some unaccountable fatuity, continue to practise the same treatment, introducing large quantities of mercury into the system, and upon this placing their sole dependence. Upon what principle the mercurial practitioners make use of their favourite nostrum, I have not been able to ascertain. All they can say in favour of it is, that when salivation takes place the fever abates; but this is not the fact, for I observed in several of those cases which terminated fatally, that the mercury occasioned a pretty considerable salivary discharge, that it generally ceased after a short time, and that, in all, the mercurial action on the system was perceptible by soreness of the mouth, fætor of the breath, ulceration of the gums, and, in some, by extensive sloughing. In one case the bloated and œdematous tumefaction of the face and head from this cause was so excessive, that scarcely a lineament of the "human face divine" could be traced. He, of course, died. But they also aver, that although the mouth is affected, unless there is a *profuse* salivary discharge for some time, no salutary effect can be hoped for. This, of itself, is a sufficient comment on the inefficacy, I would say mischievousness, of the practice. If the mouth is very sore, and the breath tainted, after a continued use of mercury, surely it is a proof that the system is charged with it. If it is to

exert any salutary influence over the disease, it ought to exhibit itself now. The absence of salivation only shews that the vital powers are singularly torpid or debilitated. The occurrence of salivation only indicates that the powers of life are still capable of exerting a healthy action; and what can be more likely to destroy this capability than the strong sedative property of mercury? I have not the slightest doubt that it did so in those cases, where salivation was established and subsequently ceased, — to say nothing of its destructive effects in those where the system was powerfully influenced by it without any salivary discharge resulting. In destroying the syphilitic poison by mercury, no medical person ever thinks of any other indication that the system is sufficiently affected by the medicine, than that of the gums being slightly tender. A man would be considered mad who had recourse to the obsolete practice of producing copious salivation for this purpose, of keeping the unfortunate patient's tongue hanging out of his mouth for a fortnight, as was the practice in the old school. As a purgative I think calomel is to be preferred generally before all others, — but only as a purgative.

No individual unconnected with the Plumper was seized with the disease, and as no precaution was taken to prevent communication, we must

naturally conclude that, in this instance at least, it was not of a contagious nature. So much for therapeuticks.

Temperance in this climate is imperatively necessary. Abstemiousness and excess are alike injurious. In imitation of Sir William Temple, every man ought to limit himself to three glasses of wine during dinner,—viz. "one for himself, one for his friends, and one for his enemies," and refect from food as little complicated as possible. It is most necessary to guard against repletion, but if one is determined to gorge himself, let it be from a single dish. If from a variety, he only aids the undertaker by driving so many nails in his coffin. Temperance, regularity of the bowels, and a cold shower bath,—to wit, two or three buckets of salt water thrown over the body, morning and evening—will do more to preserve health in this climate than all other precautions put together.

By the by, musquitoes, these most annoying of all the multifarious pests of tropical climates, are by no means numerous at Sierra Leone. The colonists of the Gambia boast of the superiority which their climate possesses over that of Freetown. The Sierra Leonese can only brag of having fewer musquitoes. "That is easily accounted for," say the men of Bathurst, "the climate of Sierra Leone is so bad that nothing can live in it, not even a musquito."

24th December. — We left Sierra Leone to-day, to cruize off the river Gallinas, a slave mart, about one hundred miles to the southward, in search of vessels engaged in the slave trade; and returned on the 17th of January, 1831, after encountering some smart tornadoes, * accompanied with very heavy thunder and lightning, so close to the ship that the flash and report were synchronous, like the repeated discharges of heavy artillery, the ship trembling under the violence of each rapidly succeeding shock. Several waterspouts passed very close to us, and the rain fell in complete torrents. During the cruize, we met with several vessels equipped for the embarkation of slaves, but having none on board, we could not legally detain them. They were in general standing off and on to the land, until their cargo should be collected, which is done by an agent on shore, who, as the slaves arrive, places them in a large shed, or factory, as it is called, where they are penned up like so many cattle. These vessels have often to remain for several weeks, before the number which they are capable of taking on board can be obtained. When this is done they run in-shore towards evening, seldom anchoring; and in the course of an hour or two, every thing being previously prepared, they

* From the Portuguese word Travado, a thunder-storm.

embark their living cargo with the assistance of large canoes, when they immediately make all sail, and are generally many miles from land before daybreak. A few days after leaving Sierra Leone, we met the Plumper, with a Spanish schooner of one hundred and eighty tons, and five hundred and four slaves, taken on board at the river Gallinas, which she had just captured.

Having retraced our steps to Sierra Leone, I shall resume my observations on whatever appears worthy of notice. The liberated African yard, depot for stores, and the jail, are placed nearly contiguous to each other at the west end of Freetown. The latter is a large unvarnished pile of stone, several stories high, surrounded by a lofty wall. It is the largest as well as the most prominent building in the town, a matter somewhat inauspicious. There are at present no fewer than twenty-eight persons in jail, awaiting trial at the ensuing sessions, accused of decoying the recently liberated Africans from home, and selling them to persons engaged in the slave trade. Most of these inhuman villains are manumitted slaves themselves, and in several instances relations or countrymen of their unfortunate victims.

In the colony of Sierra Leone, founded expressly for the suppression of the slave trade, on which such enormous sums have been

expended, and so many valuable lives sacrificed, it will hardly be credited that numerous instances have been found of persons deeply engaged in this diabolical traffic,—men holding, in some instances, respectable stations, and having the outward appearance of respectability; and that vessels have been fitted up by residents of the colony destined to carry it on in the rivers adjacent to the Peninsula.* To what extent this most atrocious practice has been carried on in the colony, or at what period it commenced, has not hitherto been ascertained, as there are no very strict parochial regulations, and consequently little or no attention paid to the registration of deaths and removals; but from facts which have recently come to light, it is conjectured that the crime has been perpetrated for a long time with peculiar enormity, and to an extent almost exceeding belief. The following are a few of the facts alluded to:—A schoolmaster has already been tried for selling some of his pupils. By his Majesty's brig Plumper, lately arrived from the river Pongos, I have learned that there are upwards of a hundred Africans, recently liberated and located at Sierra Leone, who have been kidnapped from the colony, now detained in the vicinity of that river, in

* Vide Judge Jeffcott's charge to the Grand Jury, Sierra Leone, June, 1830.

readiness to be reshipped and again subjected to all the horrors of a slave hold.

The factory where these unfortunate beings are lodged is under the superintendence of a degenerate Englishman, named Joseph, whom the authorities have been for some time endeavouring to seize and bring to justice, but without success. When the Plumper was in the above river, a female slave made her escape from the factory, and rushed into one of the boats which had just landed, begging to be taken on board. No persuasion could induce the unhappy being to leave the boat, and humanity at length induced the officer to take her on board the brig, where she was treated kindly, and eventually brought back to Sierra Leone. About the beginning of December, his Majesty's ship Favourite boarded a vessel under French colours full of slaves, several of whom spoke a little English, and were, no doubt, persons who had been liberated and settled at that colony.

The Conflict gun-brig brought to Sierra Leone, on the 17th December, a French schooner with fifty-one slaves on board, two of whom claimed the protection of the boarding officer, having been kidnapped from Regent's Town, one of the liberated African villages in this colony. The two slaves were landed here,

and the vessel taken to the French authorities at Goree.

An officer on board this frigate, who has been employed on the coast for several years, tells me that he, not long ago, captured a slave vessel, in which there was an unfortunate individual who had been kidnapped from the colony three times before, and liberated as often, owing to the different vessels in which he was embarked having been, fortunately for him, captured by his Majesty's ships Brazen, Maidstone, and Esk. Thus it appears that the practice of slave-stealing in the colony is of long standing, as it is upwards of five years since the first of those vessels left the station. The following are a few of the circumstances connected with this nefarious entrapping of our fellow-creatures for the base purpose of again selling them into slavery, which have come to my knowledge:— By an application, any person in the colony of respectable appearance may have several liberated African children apprenticed to him for a certain number of years on paying a trifling sum,—the price of indenture, which amounts to ten shillings, and stipulating to feed and clothe them during the period of their apprenticeship. These children have frequently disappeared, and no satisfactory account given of them. It is found that they have generally been purchased from their masters by the

Mandingoes for about £5, and by them again sold to regular slave agents, who are engaged to collect cargoes for vessels lying in the rivers adjacent to the Peninsula.

The manumitted slaves frequently visit Freetown in search of employment, when the emissaries of these traders in human flesh take care to throw themselves in the way of these unsuspecting people, and tell them that they will endeavour to obtain employment for them. Under this promise, they inveigle them down to Pirate's Bay, or Cockle Bay,—to the westward of the town,—where the slave dealers have canoes in readiness, on board of which they are placed, carried over to the Bullom shore, and thence to the nearest river for embarkation. Children have been entrapped even during the day at Freetown, and taken to houses, where they have been kept prisoners for some time, but being well treated, have at length been induced to accompany their jailor across the river, when they were immediately sold. At present there are not more than seventeen or eighteen thousand liberated Africans in the colony, although the chief justice at the last sessions stated, in his charge to the grand jury, that there had been twenty-two thousand of these people imported during the last ten years. This decrease, he said, did not arise from any disproportion in the number of births to that of deaths; the proportion

of the former being in 1829 as seven to one of the latter. Judging from this ratio, and allowing for casualties, there ought to have been an increase of one half upon the whole. This falling off can therefore be attributed to nothing else, mortifying as the fact must be, but to the cupidity of those infamous wretches in the colony, who have so long with impunity trafficked in the blood of their fellow-creatures.

After the many millions sterling which this colony has cost the mother country, established by her with the sole view of receiving, sheltering, and protecting all unhappy Africans who might be released by her humane exertions from the horrors of slavery, it is truly humiliating to think how very unsuccessful all her beneficent exertions have proved. To whom the blame ought to be attached I will not pretend to say. Every endeavour is, however, at present making in the colony to stop the farther progress of this vile commerce, and to bring the unprincipled perpetrators to punishment.

The Liberated African Yard, where the newly imported Africans are lodged, is a square piece of ground of considerable size, having two of its sides occupied by a range of low buildings, in which the slaves pass the night. The rest of the area is surrounded by a high wall, within which is a house for cooking their unseemly food, a well, and several tanks containing water,

together with a number of other conveniencies. A building of one story stands in the centre of the square, the ground floor of which is used as a smithy, the upper part as a residence for the blacksmith—a liberated African—and family, unless when the yard is crowded with newly imported slaves, when poor Vulcan is under the necessity of occupying the corner of one apartment. He is constantly engaged in the formation of instruments of husbandry, such as bill hooks, hoes, &c. for the slaves who have recently been, or are about to be located.

As soon as an illicit trader in slaves is taken possession of by one of our ships of war, which is generally done after a long chase, all her crew, with the exception of the captain, and one or two others, are removed on board the capturing vessel, from which they are usually landed on the nearest part of the coast, and two midshipmen or other junior officers, and from five to twenty men, according to the size of the vessel, are sent on board to navigate her to Sierra Leone, where all slave vessels captured on the coast of Africa by our cruisers are immediately carried for adjudication by the courts of mixed commission resident there. These courts, under the provisions of the treaties between Great Britain and Portugal, Spain, the Netherlands, and Brazil, ought to consist of a commissary judge, a commissioner of arbitration, and a

registrar from each of the high contracting parties. On the part of Great Britain, the governor is the present acting judge, Mr Smith, (a gentleman who has held various situations on the coast for a long period,) commissioner of arbitration, and Mr Lewis, registrar; but at present the Brazilian commissary judge, Mr Joseph de Paiva, is the only foreign commissioner at Sierra Leone. From the decision of these courts there is no appeal. Their duties are extensive, and the contingent expenses proportionably large, the whole of which are in the first instance paid by the British Government, but one half is afterwards repaid by the several foreign governments concerned. It appears by the report from the select committee on the settlement of Sierra Leone, 13th July, 1830, ordered to be printed by the House of Commons, that the expense of these courts in salaries and contingencies, to our own officers alone, in the year 1829, amounted to £6097 9s. 11d. The unhappy inmates of the holds of slave vessels brought to Sierra Leone, are landed and lodged in the Liberated African Yard, as soon as it is ascertained beyond a doubt that the vessel has been legally captured, which is sometimes not done for several days; and the slaves continue cooped up in their filthy and wretched abode, until all the tedious paltry ceremonies of the law are punctiliously

attended to; but if any epidemic prevails among them, which very frequently happens, they are landed, on the representation of the surgeon to the courts, immediately on the vessel's arrival, and lodged in the lazaretto, near Kissey. Here they remain until recovery, and until arrangements are made for locating them. After adjudication, a portion of ground, generally in the vicinage of one of the numerous villages in the colony, having been marked out by the government surveyor, or other person appointed by the governor, sufficiently large for the purpose of erecting huts, and maintaining the newly manumitted slaves, they are taken to the spot by the superintendent or an assistant, and employed in clearing it, and in cutting wood for building, and grass for thatching their future residences; and while so employed, they are lodged in a depot in the village, or in the houses of the inhabitants, if they choose to receive them.

As the latter usually find relatives or countrymen among the new comers, they are generally willing to afford them both shelter and assistance. Sometimes they are dispersed among the different villages, instead of being located in one spot. During the first six months after their arrival in the colony, they are fed and clothed by government, each receiving for this purpose twopence per diem, which is found quite adequate to their wants; and after having completed

the erection of their huts, which it takes but a short time to accomplish, they are employed at any public works that may be going forward, being permitted, during part of the six months, to cultivate the piece of ground allotted to them; the assistant superintendent of liberated Africans, before leaving them entirely to their own guidance, supplying them, from an extensive depot or store kept for that purpose, situated in close proximity to the slave yard, with articles of dress and cooking utensils, together with a quantity of esculent seeds and plants, such as Indian corn, and cassada, to rear for their future support. They are all much gratified on receiving these necessaries, considering themselves enriched.

The articles at present supplied to each male emancipated slave on his location cost about £1, 10s. which, together with his six months' allowance of twopence a-day, make the whole of the mere personal expense of each male adult to his Majesty's government amount to about £3. The daily allowance is, of course, extended in the cases of persons who from age or infirmity are incapable of supporting themselves. Females receive twopence a-day for three months only, and as many of the children as possible above a certain age, on condemnation of the vessel, are apprenticed out, as has been already stated, to persons of respectable

appearance in the colony. With the exception of those negroes recently arrived, who from the excessive crowding, and the bad quality and scantiness of the food and water, are almost always filthy, emaciated, and covered with disease, the manumitted slaves appear in general to be clean in their persons, sleek and well fed, and very well satisfied with their condition. After a short stay in the colony, the industrious are occasionally permitted to cultivate patches of waste land in the country besides their own allotted piece of ground, with the understanding that their occupation of the former shall be temporary. By selling the produce of this they are enabled to obtain many of the comforts and a few of the luxuries enjoyed by their European neighbours. Some idea may be formed of the actual condition of these people from a short description of Murray Town, a village two or three miles west of Freetown, erected in April 1829, and peopled with three hundred and twenty-six Africans just imported, placed here under the management of a discharged black soldier of the Royal African Corps. It comprises four wide streets—the huts ranged on each side, and separated from each other by pieces of cultivated ground. Each hut is formed in the following manner:—Poles about ten or twelve feet long are stuck deep in the ground, about a foot and a half apart, in the

form of a square of twelve or fourteen feet, leaving vacant spaces for one or two windows, and two doors of common size; one in front, and the other behind. Round these poles, to the height of six feet, dried twigs are wattled so as perfectly to resemble a coarse basket. The outside of this is plastered over with red clay, and the roof made quadrilateral, peaked, and thatched with long rye grass. The floor is the bare ground unpaved and unboarded, and in most of them a clay wall is run up so as to form two apartments, and thus the house is finished. The situation of the windows is, in many of them, neither supplied with glass or shutters: the weather is so hot they want neither. I have always made it a practice to enter these humble dwellings and converse with the inhabitants, who are very thankful for any attention shewn to them by a white person. They seem to like very much to be taken notice of and spoken to. "How do you do to-day, Maamè?" is always answered with a "tankee, Daadè," accompanied with a half curtsy and many smiles of satisfaction. I observed during these visits, that the furniture of the houses in this town in general consisted of a cane or bamboo sofa or bed place, with cane mats or round clumps of wood to sit on in room of chairs; a few plates, bowls, calabashes, wooden spoons, and several cast-iron pots and

kettles. In some of the houses there were even small mirrors to be seen, and several articles of finery in dress hung up. In most of them there was a bin of cocoas, besides numerous heads of Indian corn strung together and hung up to dry, baskets of cassada, which several of the inhabitants were cleaning and pounding into tapioca, and calavances, all ready for market. The huts have no chimney, and the burning log for the purpose of cooking is placed in the middle of the floor, and the smoke allowed to find its escape where it may. In the vicinity of this little village the ground is thoroughly cleared and well cultivated. Let it not be forgotten that these people have been established barely two years. Those who have been longer in the colony are in proportion better provided with necessaries and comforts.

A great many of the liberated Africans are employed as labourers in the wood trade of the river, receiving five dollars a-month as wages. Many more have been taught to employ themselves as artisans, and several are engaged daily as labourers in Freetown, and in the different villages of the Peninsula. From all that I have observed, there appears to be no lack of industry among those who have been some time in the colony, and little can be expected for a considerable period from men just escaped to light and liberty, from the dreadful privations

of a slave hold. They are acute and active in bargaining, and they do not appear to be by any means deficient in intelligence. It is unfair to take, as a criterion of the natural abilities of the liberated African, the apparent stupidity of those who have been imported at an advanced age. We all know how difficult it is, even among ourselves, to learn or improve after a certain period of life, and to get rid of bad habits which have grown with us. How much more difficult must it be to do this, and also to acquire new notions and habits at an advanced period of life, where no ray of light had ever shone upon the mind, where the habits were savage, and where the only ideas which the individual possessed did not extend farther than his casual wants and necessities!

It is among the children of these people brought up in the colony, that their mental capacity is to be judged of; and the children in the Government schools at Freetown, as well as in those of the villages, appeared to me to be equal in intelligence and acquirements to European children of the same age. The liberated Africans have not certainly made that progress in civilization which might have been expected, when we consider the trouble that has been taken and the money that has been lavished for this purpose by the mother country; but this is not attributable to any defect of natural ability among

them, but to a variety of contingent circumstances, among which not the least obvious is the continued importation of their countrymen into the colony, whose barbarous habits they have, in some measure, been weaned from, but to which from early association, they will naturally be prone to recur on observing them practised by the new comers, for whom, as countrymen, they must feel a strong attachment, and with whom, speaking the same language, and having recently left their own paternal land and much regretted homes, they must feel the strongest inclination to associate. Another cause of their tardy improvement may have been the frequent change, by death or otherwise, of governors and superintendents, and the adoption of different methods of management, or perhaps mismanagement, consequent upon these changes. Persons unacquainted with the interests of any settlement, and who have no local experience of the country and its inhabitants, must be evidently unfit to direct and command there. The practice of sending such persons from England for this purpose has not certainly tended to promote the interests of the colony, or the amelioration of its factitious inhabitants. The want of capital and encouragement to cultivate articles of tropical produce, such as coffee, cotton, &c, which would find a market out of the colony, probably also tends to throw a damp on their

industry. For of what use would it be to rear more cocoas, yams, and cassava than they can make use of themselves and dispose of in the colony, when, as these are articles which cannot be exported, they must rot on their hands. Besides these causes of the tardy progress of civilization, it does really seem to me that the superintendence of the manumitted slaves is not sufficiently close and strict. A most zealous and attentive supervision of those recently imported must be of the first consequence, so as to humanize and reclaim them from their barbarous habits,—to prevent them from relapsing into their primitive state of brutishness—to obviate their being kidnapped from the colony, in fact to exercise a salutary degree of restraint over them—to instruct them, and to assist, overlook, and protect them in all their actions, and in their operations of labour and industry. I know that all this is said to be already effected, that there are superintendents, managers, and schoolmasters in every village for the above purposes; but it appears to me that they are somewhat too remiss in their duty, and somewhat too heedless and insensible of the humane object for which they are appointed; else no individual could be kidnapped without the occurrence being speedily known,—no individual, however wild and irreclaimable, could return to his primitive savage habits, and

establish himself in "the bush," without considerable exertion being made to bring him back. That many have thus been suffered to resume their original barbarism is evident, were there no other proof of the fact, than the numerous nocturnal glimmering fires in the woods, as well as the scattered sheds, or wigwams, to be seen in various directions among the underwood and jungle throughout the peninsula, large enough to contain only two or three persons sitting upright. No one would willingly apply any personal censure in this case, because the duties of every individual connected with the liberated African department must be, if properly performed, equally arduous, laborious, and unpleasant. But, then, every one connected with it is well paid; and surely a little more paternal control than has been hitherto exercised, besides the common routine of duty, for the sake of humanity, is a great desideratum.

Two things are worthy of remark among these poor Africans: Great external respect is paid to the Sabbath. The blacks on that day are clean and neatly dressed, the religious meetings are well attended, and the busy clamour of the week is hushed into a solemn stillness, more impressive even than the calm serenity which pervades every thing on that hallowed day in our own free and happy land. No doubt the

missionaries deserve the credit of this. The other fact is, that although spirits are remarkably cheap in the colony, I have never seen, in all my excursions among them, a single liberated African in a state of intoxication. I wish I could say as much for their civilized brethren.

CHAPTER III.

In so small a community as that of Sierra Leone, where disease is so frequent a visitor, and death a sort of elbow companion — where mutual assistance and mutual friendship ought to be so invaluable, and where there is so little to be desired beyond the quiet circle of an intellectual and agreeable society, one would expect to find the most perfect harmony subsisting among its European members; but, instead of this, the colony is agitated by perpetual broils and the most violent party spirit, caused, it is said, by the treacherous calumnies and malignant insinuations of some restless, hot-headed, and evil-disposed individuals, who, to serve their own private ends, manage to set their brother colonists by the ears, while they cautiously and cunningly avoid any personal collision themselves. To-day, one person accuses another of perjury — to-morrow, two others fight a bloodless duel — soon afterwards, two more quarrel, and one of them posts the other, connecting his

name with the most opprobrious epithets—and a little later, two more horsewhip and pummel each other most unmercifully in the street,—and this, too, among men, all of whom either hold responsible official situations, or fill most respectable stations in the colony! And it is a common saying, that, if two dogs worry each other in the street, each is sure to have his party in the crowd collected round them. Where there is no cordial union among the members of any Government, its affairs must be imperfectly conducted,—the community will despise it, and look with a jealous eye on all its proceedings; and, therefore, these squabbles, although but "tempests in a teacup," do not raise the Europeans any higher in the estimation of the blacks, many of whom—the Maroons in particular—are equal to the duties of the situations which the former hold, and are capable of performing them with at least equal credit. Lieutenant-Colonel Finlay, of the Royal African Corps, is the present Lieutenant-Governor and commanding officer of the garrison, which consists of about eighty soldiers only, belonging to the African Corps, and first and second West India regiments. The Governor is a man of the best disposition, and deeply deplores the misunderstandings which so often take place among those living under his protection; but it requires more than good intentions,—it requires decision

and severe measures to regulate the affairs of the colony, and put an end to the perpetual bickerings and malversations of the Europeans, and the malpractices of the black slave dealers, which distract the colony and bring discredit upon every one connected with it. The Colonel was elevated to his present situation about a year ago, having been formerly Governor of Bathurst Town, in the Gambia, where he gave general satisfaction. He has the merit of having raised himself from a very inferior station to the rank which he now holds in the army, though, like several others who enjoy important appointments in the colony, he holds his present high office chiefly by means of a qualification which few indeed are blessed with,—viz. a peculiarity of constitution which enables him to live in its deleterious atmosphere. He has been eight or ten years in the colony and its dependencies, and has outlived Heaven knows how many governors. Death, in fact, has been the best friend of most of the persons at present in office in the colony; for could men better qualified live there, they would not be permitted to retain their situations long.

The Maroons, it is said, are not very well affected to the Government, because they are not permitted to hold situations to which they conceive themselves entitled, and for the duties of which they are quite as well qualified as the

Europeans. I have heard it also affirmed,—although I have reason to think there is little truth in the statement,—that the liberated slaves are rather discontented; but were this even the case, little danger need be apprehended from their hostility, as the latent animosity which subsists among the different tribes, as well as the difference of language, must, for an indefinitely long period, prevent any co-operative union among them.

It is understood, that there is a colonial militia corps about to be formed. The officers were appointed some time ago; and an order has been issued for the enrolment of men as soon as possible.

The nice distinction of castes is not observed here as in the West Indies,—nor is there much discrimination made between the lights and shades of moral character in the medley society of Freetown. The Europeans do not consider it pollution to associate with people of every dye —from the fairest to the blackest—carrying their peculiar taste in this respect even farther than perhaps is altogether warranted by the practices of society anywhere. This is particularly observable at their large dinner parties, where the bottle circulates with uncommon rapidity and effect, in defiance of the minor considerations of health, comfort, and character. Before the cloth is removed, it is no uncommon thing to find a few of the party "*floored.*" The

odd assemblage, sometimes met together on these occasions, is characterized by an extraordinary mania for toasts and speechifying, during which the King's good English is often murdered most cruelly. At a meeting of this sort, got up by one of the merchants in honour of the Commodore, this singular admixture of shades, of colour, and degrees of rank, was exemplified in a manner peculiarly ludicrous. The Commodore was much amused on finding that he sat down at table opposite the black pilot who last brought his ship into port,—the Chief Justice sat "cheek by jowl" with a person whom he had tried for slave-dealing only a week before,—and the Governor had to nod acquaintance with at least half-a-dozen of the black tag-rag and bobtail of the colony! "Motley's the only wear!" as Jaques says. One of the party, after a short and pithy preface in the same style, proposed the following toast, which I give verbatim:—"*The most usefullest men as is in the colony,—I means the doctors!*" And at another of these meetings, one of my friends, whose stomach is none of the most capacious, was upbraided by the gentleman who sat beside him —a man high in office, too—as not being *a'f a heater!*"

At their balls, also, the society is, if possible, still less select. They are the "dignity" exhibitions of the West, which the few respectable females in the colony deprecate and avoid,

and to which every sable goddess in the vicinity is necessarily pressed attendance. Ye gods! what would the delicate Medician nymph, of pure red and white, say—the tender fair who sips Nature's distillation alone, and would shudder at the bare mention of the word "malt"—were she told—but I could not tell her—that an African beauty, on these occasions, will drink five or six bottles of ale in the course of an evening?—that, at the supper table, if you ask her what part of a fowl you shall have the pleasure of sending her, she will perhaps tell you, "a leg and a wing, and *de bubby part*,"—meaning the breast, and that, if, for the sake of the joke, you accompany it with the parson's nose, you will overturn her equanimity, and perhaps have the whole thrown at your head, or, at least, a volley of reproaches, together with several very equivocal allusions to your indelicacy.

17th February, 1831. The Harmattan wind, is rather prevalent at this season. We have experienced its effects pretty frequently during the last two months. It usually blows strong—directly off the land—about east or east-north-east, and seldom continues longer than three or four days. During its continuance, there is a dense white haze constantly resting on the horizon; the thermometer falls three or four degrees, from eighty-two usually to seventy-eight. It produces on the

throat and organs of respiration a suffocating and parching effect, similar to the diluted fumes of burning charcoal, although it feels at the same time cold as it rushes down the air passages. The eyes feel hot and smarting, owing, it is said, to a quantity of impalpable dust, floating in the air, borne along from the arid deserts, over which it passes. The air, at all other times charged with moisture, becomes perfectly dry—vegetation is checked, and the young shoots shrivel and decay. Old residents are liable to ague, arising perhaps from the sudden and continued evaporation which it causes from the surface, and the consequent sudden obstruction of their capillary pores, which have been already debilitated by long continued action. People recently arrived seem to suffer less from its effects than those who have resided long in the country. The former feel relieved from the oppressive heat during its continuance; the latter dread its approach, which their feelings announce long before it is perceptible to the senses of the unassimilated. It has been said, that diseases abate, that convalescence is rapid, and that ulcers speedily heal under its influence. It may be so; but we have not observed any of these good effects. After a shower—of which we have had a few lately—the smell from the shore is peculiarly potent and disagreeable. The same unpleasant odour is occasionally per-

ceptible, without rain, in the evening, when the wind blows off the land. I know of nothing which this odour so much resembles as the noisome smell of green lint, after it has been macerated for some time in water, with which most people are sufficiently conversant who dwell in a part of the country where that plant is cultivated. This, perhaps, proceeds from the damp and decaying vegetation. The hills around Freetown are, at present, almost continually in a blaze. The Sierra Leonese take this method of clearing the country of the superabundant vegetation, previous to the approaching rains.

Several masters and others belonging to merchant vessels have died here lately of fever; and boats are arriving weekly from vessels, embarking wood in the river Mellacorēē, laden with the dead and dying,—victims of fever. The mortality among the seamen employed in this river has been at all times so great, that it is vulgarly believed the natives poison the water.

18th February. His Majesty's brig Plumper arrived to-day from the river Nunez, where she had been despatched in search of a slave vessel, reported to be lying there under Spanish colours. The vessel was found; but she hoisted French colours, and, of course, could not be touched. Several hundred slaves, ready for embarkation, were lodged in a factory, near the

spot where she lay, waiting the arrival of a few more, to complete the number she was able to cram into her hold.

3d March. A schooner, under Spanish colours, called the Primeira, arrived here to-day, with three hundred and eleven slaves on board; detained by the Black Joke, tender to this ship, on the 22d ultimo, off Cape Mount, bound from the river Gallinas to the Havanna. From the accounts brought by the captors, there is a very great number of vessels between this and Cape Palmos waiting to take in slaves. The tender, on first seeing the Primeira, fired several blank cartridges to bring her to, but paying no attention to this mild injunction, shot was had recourse to, one of which took effect, killing two of the slaves and the cook of the vessel, and wounding two slaves, the mate, and four of the crew. The slaves consist of one hundred and eleven men, forty-five women, ninty-eight boys, fifty-three girls, and four infants at the breast, one of whom was born since the period of capture, whose mother, unhappy creature, sickly and emaciated, was suckling it on deck, with hardly a rag to cover either herself or her offspring.

The small space in which these unfortunate beings are huddled together is almost incredible. The schooner is only one hundred and thirty tons burden, and the slave deck only two feet

two inches high, so that they can hardly even sit upright. The after part of the deck is occupied by the women and children, separated by a wooden partition from the other slaves. The horrors of this infernal apartment—the want of air—the suffocating heat—the filth—the stench—may be easily imagined; although it is remarked that this ship is one of the cleanest that ever was brought to the colony. The men were bound together in twos, by irons rivetted round the ancles. On their arrival these chains were removed, and they appeared much gratified. The countenances of all seemed lighted up with satisfaction at the prospect of being put on shore, towards which they often turned to gaze, with an expression of wonder and impatience. I went on board to visit the wounded. About one half of the boys were circumcised. I could not ascertain that they belonged to a separate tribe, although their general appearance seemed to me slightly different from the rest. Slave vessels, in the rivers adjacent to Sierra Leone, receive considerable assistance in the pursuit of their illicit traffic from some of the merchants of this colony, in the shape of articles of trade and provisions; which trifling circumstance, as it pays well, and is no direct engagement in the slave trade, these pence and farthing individuals may, perhaps, very well

reconcile to their consciences. We learn that the Primeira was supplied with bread from a vessel belonging to a merchant of Freetown.

4th March. The slaves are all landed from the Primeira to-day, and placed in the slave yard. A large canoe was employed for this purpose, which, after several trips, brought the whole on shore in the course of two hours, taking in from fifty to eighty at a time, the men first, then the women, and lastly the children. These were singing on board the schooner, in anticipation of the boat's return, and continued their song all the way on shore, laughing and clapping their hands. But the men and women, after they reached the yard, when the momentary gratification of setting foot on land once more had passed away, looked sullen and dissatisfied, but not dejected. It struck me that on landing they expected to be allowed to go wherever they pleased, and were consequently disappointed and angry when they found themselves still under control. It was impossible to gather from their looks whether any of them were keenly alive to the miseries of the situation from which they had just been released, or whether they were capable of appreciating the advantages of emancipation. I may mention, as an instance of their extreme mental debasement, that the women who were

nursing usually had both breasts occupied, the one with their own offspring, the other suckling one of the numerous abominably filthy monkeys on board the schooner. Among the whole there was scarcely sufficient covering for the nakedness of half a dozen persons. But all of them, particularly the boys and girls, on meeting the numerous persons who had, like myself, gone to witness their landing, evinced by their actions a natural and unaffected sense of modesty.

20th March. A French sloop, called the Virginie, of fifty tons, and ninety-two slaves on board, was brought in here to-day, under the following very extraordinary circumstances:— This vessel was fitted out at Nantz about a year ago, and towards the end of last month she sailed from the Plantain Islands, situated between fifty and sixty miles to the southward of this river, with her cargo of slaves, supplied by a black resident, named Corker, among whom were several negroes who had been liberated at this colony. When she sailed, her crew consisted of eight persons, but besides these she had eleven passengers,—the master and ten of the company of a French vessel, stranded on the coast. Her destination was Guadaloupe; and while making the best of her way to that port, about eight days ago, the slaves rose, took possession of the vessel, and

killed the captain and crew, with the exception of the cabin boy, who was dreadfully wounded in the scuffle. The passengers escaped, after some severe wounds, up the rigging, where they remained some time under great apprehension, but at length ventured down, on being assured by the slaves, who were now intoxicated with joy at the success of their exploit, that, if they would promise to take the vessel into Sierra Leone, no harm should be done them. When they came down, however, they were stripped, put in irons below, treated with great severity, and compelled alternately to steer the vessel, with many threats that, if they should not see land by a certain day, the whole should be massacred. Fortunately for them, they made the land on the day named. The captain, by his cruel and inhuman conduct—flogging some of the slaves daily, and striking them on all occasions with whatever weapon was near him—was the cause of the hostile attack, the success of which was owing to the women, who, from the incommodious size of the vessel, had been placed in the apartment containing the arms, which they managed to convey unperceived to the men, who rushed upon deck well prepared, and soon overwhelmed their weak and unprincipled opponents; but not without one or two of their own number killed, and several very severely wounded, which served to exasperate them still

more. Those of the French crew who were not killed in the rencontre, were deliberately and exultingly massacred, with all the horrible barbarity of which savages, smarting under recent injuries, are capable, and were afterwards thrown overboard. When the vessel appeared off this port, our boarding officer was confidently and joyfully received by the slaves as a deliverer. One of those who had been formerly liberated at Sierra Leone, and who spoke a little broken English, explained the occurrence, and stated that he had been recaptured while carrying some rice in his canoe to the Sherboro for sale, and the remaining Frenchmen confirmed his account. The slaves on their arrival exhibited a most ludicrous and grotesque appearance. They were all armed with something or other. One was standing sentinel over the man at the helm, with a drawn sword; his only article of dress a hat, the crown of which he had knocked out, and placed on his head, with the rim uppermost. Every part of the vessel had been ransacked for articles to dress and adorn their persons. Some of them were decked with fancy striped shirts, and two or three waistcoats, without inexpressibles, with a sword buckled round the middle. Some had on dress coats, without any covering either for their heads or their "hinder ends;" and others had only a waistcoat, with two or three silver watches

dangling round their necks. Their prisoners, in irons below, filthy, pitiful looking objects, were in their shirts only, dabbled with blood, as were the sails and deck of the vessel. Even after she had anchored, the Frenchmen did not consider themselves safe until an English officer and a party of men were sent on board to take charge of her. As soon as she was reported to the Governor, measures were immediately taken to have the slaves landed in the morning.

24th March. We sailed early this morning with two of our tenders, the Fair Rosamond and the Black Joke, to run down the coast for Prince's Island and Fernando Po. Having now left the colony for an indefinite period, I shall conclude the foregoing account with a few general observations. As a proof, if any proof be necessary, that the climate of Sierra Leone is at *all* times pregnant with danger to European constitutions, I shall only instance some occurrences of the last four months, which are always considered to be the healthiest of the year. During these months, the oldest residents affirm, that the climate has been more congenial than they ever remember it to have been at any former period, and yet we have had on board a number of cases of fever of an ephemeral nature, together with several pretty severe cases of remittent fever. One or two people have died on shore of the latter disease, and the masters and crews of

merchant vessels in the river have suffered very considerably from it. I have heard it said by persons in the colony, but cannot vouch for the correctness of the statement, that the concentrated form of the endemial fever, and consequent mortality at Freetown, has for many years assumed a periodical return—that the years 1823-26-29 have been more sickly and fatal than the intermediate years. A remark has been made, somewhat similar to this, by Dalzell, in his *History of Dahomey*, p. 143, published in 1793. He says, "Besides the annual unhealthy period, there seems to be a collection of pestiferous vapours which remains imprisoned for a longer period, and does not emerge above the surface oftener than once in five, six, or seven years." But setting the climate of the colony entirely aside, it appears to me that Freetown, bounded on the south by a mountainous region, magnificently picturesque, beyond which extends a rich and fertile country, and situated on the sloping bank of a noble river, with good anchorage, and ingress and egress at all times, is admirably adapted for a commercial station. As an agricultural colony, the Peninsula itself can never become of any importance. It is of too trifling extent, rocky, and mountainous, and the soil in general poor, and easily exhausted. Aware of this, many of the liberated slaves cultivate only one half of their allotted portion of

land, leaving the other in fallow until the ensuing year. As an acquaintance with the interior of Africa, its capabilities, enlightenment, and hidden sources of wealth, must at all times be a grand object, as well with the merchant as the philanthropist, it must unquestionably be desirable to retain Sierra Leone as a commercial station; for commercial intercourse has always had the effect of extending local knowledge, and producing civilization: even those parts of the coast where the traffic in slaves abounds are highly civilized, according to what is commonly understood by civilization, compared with others, which have little communication with Europeans. But as the climate is so destructive, the defence of the colony might be safely intrusted to the hands of those European merchants who choose to risk their lives in the pursuit of wealth, together with the Maroons and Nova Scotians, who would be sufficient of themselves to protect it from any hostile attack which the natives might make upon it, without any military force, beyond the body of militia at present organizing, and a police establishment. The probability of such an attack, I believe, has never entered into any one's head, as the most friendly relations have always been kept up with the Chiefs in the vicinity, who have not for many years exhibited any hostile intentions. Were the liberated

Africans, however, left entirely to themselves, without superintendence or control, there is little doubt, while the slave trade continues, that from the dissensions which must arise among the various tribes, the whole would be recaptured and sold into slavery in the course of a very short time. As they have been released from bondage by our exertions, and placed here under our sacred protection, we are bound to foster and defend them by all the ties of honour and humanity. Whatever alterations may be effected in the government of the colony—and I believe important changes are in contemplation—some public establishment must, therefore, still be necessary, were it only for this last purpose: but as the climate is at all times so injurious to Europeans, and as the blacks are the only permanent residents, and are, many of them, particularly the Maroons and Nova Scotians, quite capable of filling situations of trust, it would seem to be advisable, even were the colony to remain on its present footing, to remove by degrees as many Europeans as possible from their present official appointments, substituting the blacks in their room. When they find that they are considered eligible to hold these situations, their desire to obtain them will be great, and their anxiety to qualify themselves and their children for that purpose will be in proportion; and I have no doubt that ultimately

there would not be any absolute necessity for a single European in the colony.

27th March. We are off Cape Mount this morning, bending our course to the southward. So numerous and immense are the shoals of fish on this part of the coast, particularly in calm weather, that the sea for many miles round appears in a complete state of tumult. Unruffled by a breath, its still surface bursts forth suddenly in different directions as if it were alive. Frothing and agitated, the circumscribed splashing of each separate riotous shoal of bonita, fry, and sharks intermingled, resembles the beating surf on so many sunken rocks, and has, no doubt, often been mistaken for such in the many "doubtful dangers" with which our charts are so variously studded, to the great terror of all sea-going old women. Thousands and tens of thousands of these finny tenants of the deep are leaping and gamboling alternately in the air and in the water, in the most surprising manner; feeding, to all appearance, on each other,—the hungry bonita gobbling up the unoffending and defenceless fry, and the ravenous sharks devouring both. One of these voracious animals is seen in the centre of each shoal of small fish, and seems to help himself as they swim rapidly round him in an anxious and alarmed manner, giving the broken and agitated surface a gyratory appearance. But even more

abundant than these are the remora, or sucking fish, which adheres so tenaciously to whatever it comes in contact with, by means of the singular apparatus on the back of its head, that no little strength is required to drag it from its hold. These attach themselves to the bottoms of ships in such multitudes, that they are said sometimes very materially to retard their progress through the water. Whenever any thing is thrown overboard, they are seen to rush from the ship's bottom in a body, and attack the substance, if edible, and after devouring it return to their resting place. Several of these have been caught with a baited hook, measuring generally from twelve to eighteen inches. With the idea of *thinning* the sea of them, I suppose, and of course, increasing the ship's velocity, a few diverting skippers have been in the habit of compelling their crews to catch two daily, and to muster every morning with one in each hand, or subject themselves to the severe displeasure of their sage commander. It is astonishing through what strange, minute, and undiscovered crannies the sagacity of some men, "vested with a little brief authority," will sometimes ooze out.

31st March. A current has been setting us so rapidly to the north-north-east, that we are surprised this afternoon by finding ourselves close off the river Cestos, about forty-five miles

out of our reckoning. The natives are making fires on the beach, the smoke from which is seen to rise in various directions as a signal for us to land, and "*make trade*" as they call it—the usual signal to merchant vessels, which they no doubt take us for.

2d April. As we run to the southward the lightning, particularly over the land, is nightly most vivid and unintermitting. We passed Cape Palmas yesterday, noted by African adventurers for the violent tornadoes so often met with in its vicinity. We had also to bear the brunt of one of these in passing; however, the wind was not very violent, but the lightning was most brilliant, dancing and flashing like so many lighted torches hurled through the dark and troubled sky. The thermometer rises as we approach the equator. Its lowest daily range at present is eighty-three, highest eighty-five degrees.

12th. The Island of St Thomas is in sight to-day, but at a great distance. We are in north latitude, within thirty-six miles of the equator, and in five degrees thirty minutes east longitude. The rainy season has just commenced here. Since the 5th we have had showers daily, and such ungentle ones as penetrate to the skin in a very few minutes; and, owing to the shrinking of the wood, and consequent opening of the seams, make the ship thoroughly wet to the kelson.

16th. The lower part of Prince's Island, towards which we are directing our course, was indistinctly seen this morning through the drizzle that seemed to be falling all round it, the dense and dark clouds shrouding its summit in a wide impenetrable pall of murky vapour. About midday a tornado came on, accompanied by heavy rain and thick weather, preventing us from reaching the roadstead this day. Prince's Island is celebrated among African cruizers for the bad weather so commonly met with near it, its frequent and vexatious showers of rain and gusts of wind being quaintly termed by our seamen "Prince's Mixture," and of this we have been compelled to take a few very hearty pinches, *nolens volens*, during the last twelve hours. On the 17th, we approached the island rapidly, with fine weather and a clear sky. Its high and broken outline has a most singular appearance, and might, with very little stretch of imagination, be thought to resemble a vast ivy-covered ruin. Nature must have been in one of her most fanciful humours when she formed a land so beautiful and romantic, covered, as it is, with one continued sombre impenetrable forest, from the bosom of which issue miniature mountains, perpendicular solitary rocks, and undulating hills, of singular and fantastic shape, decked in the gayest attire of vegetation. When at some distance from the island, one of the highest

and most remarkable peaks in its centre resembles in shape the horn of a rhinoceros; and in West Bay, which we reached about noon, the uncommon appearance and formation of the hills is equally striking. The whole of the vicinity of this Bay is covered with a rich grove of majestic trees, tangled and matted together, with thick-leaved parasites, and creeping plants of the brightest green, clothing, like a thick garment, the body of the island, which elevates itself suddenly to its loftiest height, from the verge of this capacious basin, but variegated in its ascent by the sportive agency of Nature, which has thrust forth, from the thick forest on its sides, rocks and hills of various form—accuminated or dental—round or capital—or lofty table lands, resembling artificial fortresses, whose precipitous grayish-white basaltic cliffs, partially ornamented with hanging patches of shrubs, are seen emerging from the green labyrinth, streaked with the black soil and decayed brushwood, washed from their summits by the sweeping rains. A very pretty cascade is seen from the anchorage, foaming and frothing down one of the loftiest of these jutting precipices; in fine weather, only a narrow white thread dividing the dark face of the cliff, but tumbling down in a broad and agitated sheet of foam during the inundating periodical torrents of these latitudes. Whoever has seen the wild and romantic

scenery on the south side of the entrance of Rio de Janeiro, will understand the character of that of Prince's Island. The resemblance is striking; but the former is far inferior in objects of natural beauty, to the diversified grandeur and wanton and luxuriant magnificence of this gem of the ocean.

In West Bay there is nothing that deserves the name of a town, but merely a few scattered huts in various places, nearly hid among the trees, the largest congeries of which has obtained the name of Ferrara Village, from being situated on a plantation belonging to Senor Ferrara, a Portuguese, possessing the largest property and greatest influence in the island. These huts are of the most wretched description, and inhabited by slaves, attached to the estates, or by blacks, who are led to prefer the sea shore, because they are enabled to obtain a few of the luxuries of life, by supplying vessels which may touch here, with fruit, and other articles of fresh provisions. In Ferrara Village there is one stone building, the only one to be seen, and this is unfinished, but serves for the occasional residence of the owner of the plantation, and his lady, who, by the by, has a great partiality for the British navy, and the society of British officers, the number of Portuguese on the island being very small, and their society by no means desirable. The good lady forsakes

her other estates, and migrates to this spot, on the arrival of any of our ships of war, bringing with her a whole train of attendants—male and female slaves. Setting no bounds to her hospitality, she uses every endeavour to please and amuse us, and make the time pass agreeably, and has, in consequence of this, obtained the title of "Queen" of Prince's Island. She is about thirty-five years of age, has rather a pleasing countenance, but a clumsy figure and awkward gait; and although born of Portuguese parents, has never been out of the island, and is consequently quite unsophisticated, in fact, a complete child of Nature, if we except an uncommon penchant for dress and ornaments. She understands English pretty well, but speaks it imperfectly, in the usual lingua franca style of the coast. Being thus untaught, much of her conduct, if measured according to our scale of female decorum, might be set down to levity or vulgarity; but in point of hospitality, kindness to her slaves, and goodness of disposition, she is the very pink of Portuguese. I think it necessary to say thus much of a lady from whom every officer in his Majesty's ships, employed on this pestilent coast, has experienced more or less of disinterested civility, attention, and kindness,—matters of no trifling consideration where all around—climate, country, and inhabitants—are savage and inhospitable.

The lower part of the hills skirting the Bay seems to be well cultivated. The soil here is alluvial, and very rich and productive. The coffee plantations on the island are very extensive, and the berry is much prized for its rich flavour. Almost all the tropical fruits are to be had in great abundance. Hogs and poultry are very plentiful and cheap. Although there is no great variety of birds on the island, their plumage is exceedingly splendid, particularly that of several varieties of the king-fisher. A very inelegant species of *Fringilla* discourses sweet music in the woods, and the gray parrots, which are very numerous, keep up a constant chattering during the day; bodies of them flying over the ship from the north to the south side of the Bay every evening about sunset, and returning again soon after day-break. Numbers of these, together with every article of fresh provisions which the island produces, are brought alongside the ship in canoes for sale or barter. Old clothes are the favourite article of exchange, money being of little or no value. The water is excellent and abundant, and is obtained from several beautiful and romantic bubbling rivulets, which have their source in the dense and heavy clouds, attracted and detained by the numerous tree-clad lofty mountain peaks. The negroes here have a singular method of catching a fish, rather smaller than a pilchard,

and somewhat resembling it, of which they are exceedingly fond. The plan is something like that used in England, with the acrid seeds of the *Cocculus Indicus*, for the capture of fish, particularly by mischievous schoolboys. They build a low wall of loose stones round a pool, just within low-water mark. This is completely covered, of course, when the sea is full, which, as it recedes, leaves numbers of the fry detained in the trap. The pool, however, being pretty large, and the fish uncommonly nimble, it is impossible to catch them with any degree of ease. The negroes then take a plant, which, in a slight degree, resembles the blue garden lupine, the leaves and stem of which they squeeze, pressing out the juice and stirring it in the water. This has a mawkish, unpleasant smell, and produces a most extraordinary effect upon the fish, although a very small portion of the plant is made use of. They at first rush from side to side of the pool, apparently in the greatest alarm and excitement, and then suddenly become torpid, and are easily taken with the hand.

The island is about ten or twelve miles in length, five or six broad, and perhaps from three thousand to four thousand feet high. Although of such trifling breadth, yet the passage across it, even on horseback, occupies two or three hours, owing to the ruggedness

and various windings of the mountain road. Besides what has been mentioned, it produces cedar and ironwood in abundance. Bush cats, as they are called, and monkeys, are very numerous, but by no means troublesome; and only two species of snakes have been observed on the island, the one green, the other black, both of which are small and harmless. The only article exported from the island is coffee, almost all of which goes to Boston in America, and Bordeaux in France; none whatever is received by Portugal, the mother country. St Antonio, a small town, situated on the eastern side of the island, is considered its capital. The vicinity of this town is marshy and very insalubrious; but in West Bay, if we may believe the reports of the natives, fever has never made its appearance; and those who have contracted intermittents at St Antonio, speedily get rid of them on residing for a short time in this vicinity. But, of course, this boast of its immunity from fever must be received with caution: as a proof of it, the Black Joke tender, when fitting in this bay some time ago, had several men seized with fever, one of whom died.

19th. Several of the squadron, including the Atholl, Medina, and Sea Flower, tender to this ship, are lying here, recently from Fernando Po, where they had been for a considerable period. The master of the Medina, and a boy,

died to-day of fever, contracted there, and her commander is labouring under the same disease. The purser of the Atholl, and a seaman of the Sea Flower, are both seriously ill of the same pitiless scourge, caught at the same place. The latter was sent on board this ship to-day, under my care, and is evidently in a most precarious condition. This does not say much in favour of the salubrity of our new settlement at Fernando Po.

22d April. Yesterday I went round the north end of the island in a boat to Porto Antonio. We were five hours on the passage, starting from the ship at six A.M. and arriving at eleven. Skirting West Bay, we found the shore garnished with numerous large rocks, consisting of isolated bundles of basaltic pillars, some upright, others horizontal and oblique; here resembling an artificial wall, there appearing above the water irregularly rolled together, like the ruined pillars and steps of an ancient temple, the broken ends of the smaller columns shewing like the remains of its tesselated pavement. The island to the northward has a greater appearance of hill and dale, and is more extensively cultivated than in the vicinity of West Bay. Most of the beautiful valleys near the beach possess some straggling huts, the residence of fishermen, whose canoes are seen hauled up on the sand, or paddling

some miles off shore, manned with four or five hands, busily engaged in their occupation. The crews of these slender craft stand upright when they use the paddles, which are consequently of considerable length. The country along the sea coast on this part of the island is richly wooded throughout, neat-looking *Quintas* appearing through the trees in different directions. Porto Antonio is a very deep, narrow inlet, protected by batteries erected on the brows of three or four of the numerous verdant hills on each side, mounting a very considerable number of guns, and apparently in pretty good order. We were hailed from the principal of these in passing, and desired to pull on shore, which we did, and received a black soldier on board to guide us to the residence of the Governor. This august personage, Captain Joaquim of the Portuguese marine, happened to be at his country residence in ill health, and Senor Ferrara, mentioned above, was officiating in his absence. The house of this gentleman, and those of two or three other merchants, situated near the head of the bay, to the right, have rather an elegant and imposing appearance. A little beyond these, is the town of St Antonio, placed in the low swampy ground at the very head of the bay, in the worst situation which could have been chosen. It consists of rectangular, wet,

unpaved, grass-grown streets; the houses built of wood, covered with red tiles, with holes in the wall instead of windows, and surrounded by wooden balconies, in which the inhabitants have generally a grass hammock placed, to loll in during the heat of the day. In this wretched town there are no fewer than seven or eight churches,—a little superior, of course, to the other buildings, and distinguished from them by a plentiful coating of whitewash. Only about four or five hundred inhabitants reside in the town—many of those who possess houses there, from its insalubrity, preferring a residence on their pieces of cultivated ground in the country, where they produce coffee, cotton, and other articles for exportation, and domestic use. Here was residing one of the many victims to Don Miguel's tyrannical policy,—a priest who had delivered a sermon at Oporto, in which he had made use of some slight invective against the government of the usurper, for which he was, with another of the same profession, exiled for a period of ten years. His companion in misfortune was sent to the Island of St Thomas, where the poisonous atmosphere, aided, no doubt, by his own mental distress, put a period to his existence a few weeks after his arrival. The host was paraded about the streets while we were here, and the padres, most of whom were blacks,

with a string of black boys accompanying the procession, bellowed most lustily, with little external show of devotion, what, I suppose, was intended for a hymn of praise, while the inhabitants in the houses, as they passed, knelt and crossed themselves. The performers in the ceremony, however, had not even the decency to sham a little devotion, or affect to shew, by their demeanour, some respect for the solemn mummery in which they were engaged. This, however, seems to be the common sin of Catholics, in countries much nearer to the shrine of St Peter. Oftener than once I have seen a pretty Italian girl on her knees in church, with her hands clasped, muttering a prayer, and at the same time looking heedlessly round her, and smiling and glancing unutterable things from under her long dark eyelashes, when she found that she had attracted the notice of a stranger, who, Heaven knows, had perhaps as little piety, but a much larger share of hypocrisy than herself. The ground about the town emits a strong and offensive smell; and the atmosphere feels very hot, damp, and close. In passing the guard-house, the black sentry, with nothing else save a ragged shirt on, and the belt of a cartouche box buckled round his middle, presented arms to us; and the officer of the guard came out with a parrot in his hand, and asked us if we wanted to buy!

There are about four hundred soldiers, including militia and regulars, on the island; about twenty European residents, and half as many more mulattoes. The whole number of its inhabitants, including the slaves on the estates of the Portuguese, who form the chief portion of the population, was stated to me to be about five thousand. Of these a very few are runaway slaves, who occupy principally the south part of it. There is at present lying at this place two schooners under Spanish colours, whose occupation is doubtless the transportation of slaves from Africa. These vessels, Spanish as well as Portuguese, are in the frequent habit of coming here to refit and obtain refreshments, and perhaps merchandise with which to purchase their cargo of human beings. From the strong current against us, our return to the ship by the same way occupied eleven hours, although the distance does not exceed sixteen miles.

Having completed our stock of wood and water, we sailed again on the twenty-fourth, and after one week's unsuccessful cruize off the river Bonny, bore up for Clarence Settlement at Fernando Po, where we arrived and anchored on the 2d of May. The superficies of this island, which is said to be about forty-five miles long by twenty broad, does not possess the broken diversified appearance of Prince's Island — the starting cliffs, the unconnected and fantastic hills;

the steep ridges bursting from its verdant and expansive bosom, like the rich carved work of an alto relievo. Here the land appears gradually and uninterruptedly to ascend from the sea coast, and unbroken, excepting on its western aspect, where, in some places near the summit, it is ridgy and precipitous, terminating in two lofty peaks, the highest and most northern of which, called Clarence Peak, is 10,700 feet in height, and is seen occasionally, at distant and uncertain periods, to emit smoke and flame; the southmost is considerably less, but equally remarkable, from its apex resembling a cone with the top broken off, and, by the limit of trees being at the base of this cone, appearing as if it had been, like the former, a volcano at some remote period. These mountains, covered as far as the base of their conical summits with lofty forest trees, are separated from each other by a deep and wide vale, studded with a few smaller hills and rising grounds equally luxuriant in verdure, o'ertopped by groves of palms; issuing from which, as well as from the low land near the sea-shore, may be seen numerous wreaths of curling smoke from the fires of the natives, but no hamlets, huts, or places of residence are visible—nothing but trees, trees, trees, to the very water's edge, thick, green, and bushy, like a rich vegetable garden. As we approached the land, with a brisk breeze from the south-west,

and a hazy atmosphere, the mountains assumed a deep blue colour, and the irregular strata of dense white clouds resting on their sides, seeming to intermingle with the deep cerulean ground, resembled through the misty sky a vast and irregular wall of polished variegated marble. The Cameroon mountains on the mainland, as we more nearly approached the settlement, were seen towering their lofty heads amidst the clouds, thirteen thousand feet above the level of the sea. The summits of these mountains are often seen covered with snow. We found the Black Joke here refitting, after having had, on the night between the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth April, a severe but successful action off the south-east point of this island, with a large Spanish slave brig, called the Marinerito, of three hundred and three tons, five guns, twenty pounders, (one on a pivot,) and seventy-two men, and having four hundred and ninety-six slaves on board. The tender had only two guns mounted, eighteen pounders, and forty-four men. The action was most gallantly contested, and taking place during the night, in calm weather, when each vessel was obliged to use her sweeps, lasted for several hours. The Spaniard did every thing in his power to escape, until a light breeze sprang up, when, finding the tender gained upon him, he shortened sail, and prepared to defend his vessel to the utmost,

and the action only terminated by running the tender alongside, boarding, and taking possession of him. The tender lost one man, and had six wounded, among whom was her resolute and excellent commander, Lieutenant William Ramsay. The prize had fifteen of her crew killed, four desperately wounded, and several slightly; and I regret to say, there were also unfortunately two of the slaves killed, and a few wounded, by the shot from the capturing vessel, and the cutlasses of the boarders in the scuffle. Among the numerous affairs of this nature which have occurred on the coast, this is decidedly one of the most spirited. The disparity of force was unusually great. The Marinerito is almost new, and one of the finest vessels ever seen afloat, being fifteen feet longer, and having greater beam than the tender, which is allowed by every one to be herself a most symmetrical specimen of naval architecture, but is fast going to decay. The cool determination of our seamen was irresistible, sweeping and firing alternately; while the Spaniard compelled the slaves to take the oar, and had therefore an additional advantage over his pursuers. It is gratifying to think that *Jack* is still the same—that he fights for the love of it just as he was wont to do—for it is not to be supposed that any notions concerning the inhumanity of slave-dealing, or the boon of

emancipation which he is about to confer on so many hundreds of his fellow-creatures, enter his thoughtless head, when he begins the conflict. He is ordered—it is his duty: and, besides this, he likes it, being a pugnacious kind of animal, fond of a little excitement, to vary the monotony of his life, hebetated by seclusion from the rest of the world; and to add another tale to the string of extraordinary "*yarns*" which he generally has to "*spin.*" I shall give one anecdote, as an instance of the remarkable coolness, intrepidity, and humour of *Jack*, even in the very thick of the fight. Just as the tender got alongside of her antagonist, her commander gave orders for all hands to board. The boatswain's mate, Peter Kenney —a fine old seaman, with only one eye, having perhaps lost the other in some similar "brush," for it seemed to be a pleasant sort of amusement to him—deliberately took out his pipe, and, after a piercing whistle, repeated loudly, "All hands to board!" and called out to one of his shipmates, as he jumped upon the enemy's deck—so confident was he of success—"Give us a rope to lash the —— with!" One of the young midshipmen, Mr Pearce, zealous to distinguish himself, had three hairbreadth 'scapes in the confusion of boarding. Besides having a pistol ball through his hat, he was poked overboard, just as he got on the slave vessel's

gunwale, by a sabre thrust, which penetrated his clothes, and grazed his side; and he was, also, nearly losing his life after he got there, being unable to swim, and his perilous situation remaining for some time unobserved. When our brave fellows got on board, and the decks were cleared, which was but the work of a moment, the scene of misery which presented itself was truly heart-rending. The inhuman crew (among whom, I regret to say, were several Englishmen) were not to be pitied, but their wounded received every assistance from Mr Douglas, the medical officer of the tender. It was their victims, the poor hapless slaves, that demanded the commiseration and the fullest exertion of the humanity of the captors. It has been said, that during the action two of them were killed, and several wounded; and, when we consider the mass of human beings on board, so small a number is truly surprising. Crowded to excess below—frightened by the cannonading—without water to drink, the allowance of which is at all times scanty—and almost without air during the whole of the engagement—death had already begun to make frightful ravages among them. In two days from the period of capture thirty of them had paid the debt of nature. One hundred and seven were placed in the wretched hole called an hospital, at Fernando Po, where every

day still added one or two to the fatal list, from privation, terror, and mental affliction. The rest, little able to undertake the voyage, were sent under the superintendence of Mr Bosanquet, mate of the tender,* to Sierra Leone in the prize for adjudication by the Court of Mixed Commission there. Immediately after the vessel was secured, the living were found sitting on the heads and bodies of the dead and dying below. Witnessing their distress, the captors poured a large quantity of water into a tub for them to drink out of; but, being unused to such generosity, they merely imagined that their usual scanty daily allowance of half-a-pint per man, was about to be served out; and when given to understand that they might take as much of it and as often as they felt inclined, they seemed astonished, and rushed in a body, with headlong eagerness, to dip their parched and feverish tongues into the refreshing liquid. Their heads became wedged in the tub, and were with some difficulty got out—not until several were nearly suffocated in its contents. The drops that fell on the deck were lapped and sucked up with a most frightful eagerness. Jugs were also obtained, and the water handed round to them;

* Since promoted, as well as the commander and assistant surgeon of the tender, for the gallantry and skill that each displayed during the unequal conflict.

and in their precipitation and anxiety to obtain relief from the burning thirst which gnawed their vitals, they madly bit the vessels with their teeth, and champed them into atoms. Then, to see the look of gratification—the breathless unwillingness to part with the vessel from which, by their glistening eyes, they seemed to have drawn such exquisite enjoyment! Only half satisfied, they clung to it, though empty, as if it were more dear to them, and had afforded them more of earthly bliss, than all the nearest and dearest ties of kindred and affection. It was a picture of such utter misery from a natural want, more distressing than any one can conceive who has not witnessed the horrors attendant on the slave trade on the coast of Africa, or who has not felt, for many hours, the cravings of a burning thirst under a tropical sun. On their way ashore to this island from the prize—their thirst still unquenched—they lapped the salt water from the boat's side. The sea to them was new: until they tasted all its bitterness, they, no doubt, looked upon it as one of their own expansive fresh water streams, in which they were wont to bathe, or drink with unrestrained freedom and enjoyment. Before they were landed, many of the Africans already liberated at this settlement went on board to see them, and found among them several of their friends and relations. The meeting, as may

be supposed, was for the moment one of pleasure, but soon changed into pain and grief. Can there be in Britain—the happy and the free—an individual with a heart in his bosom who will, after this, advocate slavery? A single fact like this overthrows all the plausible sophistry which such an individual may make use of to obtain partisans besides those who, like himself, are interested in its support. Such converts to the creed of the right of property in human flesh are much misled. They have only shewn to them the bright side of the picture—the comparatively happy (yet truly wretched!) condition of the slaves in our West India colonies. They know nothing of the withering horrors daily taking place on the coast of this desolated and unhappy land, from which between sixty and eighty thousand of its poor, unoffending children are forcibly abstracted annually—cruelly torn from home, friends, and kindred—from all that can alone make a life of wretchedness tolerable. The Spanish crew, with the exception of a few sent up in the prize to Sierra Leone, were kept prisoners for some time at Fernando Po, but were afterwards sent in the Atholl to the island of Anobona, where they were landed and turned adrift.

The wretched condition of so many unfortunate beings, crowded in such a small space as the slave-deck of this vessel, was shocking to

every feeling of humanity. The disinterested zeal which our Government has always displayed in the cause of humanity, by urging foreign powers to exert themselves in preventing vessels from fitting out in their ports for the slave trade, and to enforce the penalties enacted by law against those persons found engaged in it, together with our own individual exertions towards its suppression, although highly creditable and praiseworthy, have, unfortunately, from a want of sufficient firmness and resolution in our remonstrances, and a callousness on the part of these foreign powers, had an indirect tendency to aggravate the barbarity with which it is carried on. The miscreants engaged in this nefarious traffic, to render their emoluments commensurate to the hazard they now run of capture and punishment, in consequence of these benevolent exertions, cram into their vessels twice the number of unhappy wretches they were wont to do; so that, if once or twice successful, their losses, by capture, may be covered, and their risks compensated. The profits are so enormous, that, with the large number of slaves now embarked, one successful adventure out of three or four will do more than pay the expenses of all. Although Britain, by her beneficent endeavours, has relieved many thousands of these ill-starred Africans from their miserable thraldom, yet she has thus,

unconsciously, added to the cruelty of the vile commerce, owing to the supineness, indifference, or bad faith, of those nations pledged, by means of her humane endeavours, to its entire annihilation, who, were they zealous in the cause, would grant us the right of search, and capture of all vessels fitted for the reception of slaves, as well as those found with slaves actually on board,—would prevent vessels from fitting out in their ports for the trade, and would punish those persons severely who might be found carrying it on.

A perusal of the printed correspondence between the British and foreign Governments, relative to the slave trade, places the magnanimity and benevolence of our own happy country in the most brilliant and enviable light, as contrasted with the cruel apathy and imbecility of those nations, bound by every engagement to its suppression, but whose subjects are yet indirectly permitted to carry on the infamous traffic. The formation of a settlement by the British Government at Fernando Po had chiefly for its humane object the removal of the Mixed Commission Courts nearer the principal seat of the slave trade, that its victims might be sooner landed and located, after the capture of the vessel in which they were embarked,—the passage to Sierra Leone usually occupying a month, during which, the sufferings

of the unfortunate creatures are dreadful, great numbers of them dying of dysentery, or other diseases, from the small quantity and the badness of the food and water, and the excessive crowding. The obstacles which the Spanish Government placed in the way of the formation of this settlement—the toleration of vessels to fit out at Cadiz, obviously for the traffic, although, ostensibly, as licit traders to St Thomas and Prince's Islands—the frequent renewal of claims by the Brazilian Government, for reimbursements in cases of vessels condemned for illegal trading in slaves, and of applications for permission to its subjects to carry on this trade for a longer period than that to which it was limited by the Convention of 23d November, 1826—the pertinacious determination of the French Government not to grant us the right of search and capture of the numerous vessels we meet with, under the French flag, engaged in this hateful traffic—the extensive annual importation of slaves into the French colonies of Guadaloupe and Martinique, in the face of the established laws, by evident connictation or tacit consent, on the part of the local authorities—the fact of the Portuguese Government agent, at Boa Vista, being openly one of the most extensive slave dealers on the coast of Africa, and continuing in his illicit course so long unobstructed,—all

serve to shew, that these Governments are regardless of their engagements, and have not a genuine desire towards the abolition of negro slavery; but endeavour to screen from merited punishment those unprincipled adventurers, by whom the restrictions of the treaties between these Governments and our own are so flagrantly violated: and it is evident, from the style of our remonstrances, that we cannot *command* upright dealing, where the interest of these powers is concerned.

While there are so many facilities afforded to the subjects of these foreign Governments for carrying on this illicit trade, all our single-handed endeavours towards its suppression must prove worse than useless, as will be seen in the sequel. Until it shall be declared piracy by a law of nations, and the equipment of vessels for the slave trade shall be held an actual engagement in it — and until the most cordial union and co-operation, and the most energetic measures, are adopted by all civilized nations towards its suppression — and the utmost extent of punishment inflicted on those who bid defiance to the laws enacted against it, — the trade of blood can never be entirely put an end to. Treaties, I suppose, are indispensable preliminaries towards a consummation so devoutly to be wished; but foreign powers seem hitherto to have denounced the

slave trade among their subjects, without any intention of *fulfilling* the stipulations of these treaties, but with the sole purpose of obtaining something in return for their concessions, highly favourable to themselves, from England, whose weak point they, no doubt, consider to be, her predilection for the abolition of African slavery. From this base lukewarmness on the part of these states,—civilized, I suppose, they must be called,—the prospect of perfect freedom to the injured African must still be very far distant.

By the villains employed on board of those vessels engaged in the slave trade, life is held so cheap, and their moral turpitude is so excessive, that the most atrocious crimes are perpetrated, and the most diabolical cruelties inflicted upon the persons of their unoffending captives, with impunity, and without compunction. A frightful instance of this occurred on board the schooner stated in a former page as having been taken by his Majesty's brig Plumper. One of the female slaves, with a chastity of demeanour "above all Greek, all Roman fame," and a purity of heart that would have done honour to the most refined and exalted state of human society, had long and indignantly repulsed the disgusting advances of the master of the schooner, until, at last, the iniquitous wretch, finding himself foiled in his execrable attempts on her person, became furious with disap-

pointment, and murdered his unfortunate and unoffending victim with the most savage cruelty, the details of which are too horrible to be conceived, far less described! And yet these inhuman miscreants, in the event of their vessel being captured, are generally allowed to go unpunished. We cannot, or at all events we do not, punish them: that is left for the laws of their own country, and they are consequently suffered to escape.

This is but one instance of the numerous unheard of horrors entailed on the native Africans by the slave trade, as it is at present carried on. I shall relate another which also occurred very recently. His Majesty's ship Medina, cruizing off the river Gallinas, descried a suspicious sail, and sent a boat to examine her, the officer of which found her to be fitted for the reception of slaves, but without any on board, and consequently allowed her to proceed on her course. It was discovered some time afterwards, by one of the men belonging to the vessel, that she had a female slave on board when the Medina made her appearance, and knowing that, if found, this single slave would condemn the vessel, the master (*horresco referens*) lashed the wretched creature to an anchor, and ordered it to be thrown overboard! This is an instance of the additional inhumanity indirectly entailed on the

slave trade by the benevolent exertions of England. Had our Government been able to obtain from Spain, by the firmness and determination of her remonstrances, permission to seize all vessels under her flag *fitted for the reception of slaves*, this vessel could by no means have escaped, and no object could have been gained by the atrocious murder. As it is, our treaty with Spain limits us to the seizure of vessels with slaves *actually on board;* and this single slave, if found by the Medina, would have made the vessel a legal capture; to prevent which the poor creature was cruelly sacrificed —the life of a slave being considered by these wretches as no better than that of a dog, or one of the brute creation.

But, after all, we do not afford perfect freedom to the liberated African. Although located at Sierra Leone, the doom of everlasting banishment from the place of his nativity—from all that is dear to him—still hangs over his devoted head; and freedom, with nothing to live for, is but a superficial embellishment to the miseries of a wretched existence. We have it not in our power to return him to his happy home, and reunite him to every loved attachment, from which he has been forcibly separated To effect this, would be to give him genuine liberty, and would be a balm to all his sorrows but it is impossible. His country is almos

unknown. There are indeed a few Karancoes, Bulloms, and Kussos, who have been generally made slaves in war, that manage to get back to their own country, which is not far distant from Sierra Leone; but these bear a very trifling proportion to the many thousands annually carried from the coast.

On the other hand, if measured by our notions of felicity, the African's home is not a happy one. The state of constant warfare and barbarism among many tribes, make it a question with some persons whether they are not better in their state of demi-freedom at Sierra Leone, or even mancipated to Christian masters, than as slaves to some savage chief in their own country, subject to be sold or sacrificed, as he may think fit. To men more civilized than they are, however, attachment to their native soil would make even a life of slavery tolerable there.

> Such is the patriot's boast, where'er we roam,
> His first, best country ever is at home.

I have often heard individuals affirm, that the enslaved African in a Christian country lives in comparative ease and happiness—that he is happy in a state of slavery and exile. I know that in Brazil the very opposite is the case. The same persons affirm that the African is callous to his removal from his native land.

I have observed nothing that would lead me to believe such a melancholy statement. But even if, as these persons affirm, the rude savage, ignorant of the object of his violent seizure, when relentlessly dragged from the home of his fathers, is *barely* sensible of the loss of friends and of his separation from the scenes of his youth, endeared by every fond association, surely they will concede that the slave must feel his abject condition most acutely, who is blessed by the benign beams of civilization, and improved by residence in a Christian country, has learned to read, and to appreciate the merits of liberty, who feels himself a man, and that he is lorded over by his brother man, and treated by him like the "beasts that perish,"—that he was bought, and may be sold by him? Like the block of marble under the rough hands of the quarryman, we will suppose that he *may*, perhaps, feel but little his violent separation from the parent rock, and may not be in much danger of suffering in his savage state from the buffetings and hard knocks he meets with; but, as the same rough mass of stone gradually swells into life under the inspired chisel of the statuary, so, as civilization advances, does the slave not become more sensible to the harsh grasp of the rude, the ignorant, and unfeeling? and is it not then that the degradation of slavery and all its pangs are most acutely felt? and

then that freedom is most imperatively demanded, and most highly relished? This will be generally admitted; yet, even here, as in the case of his forcible removal from his country, these irrational advocates of slavery affirm that the African is equally insensible, regardless of his liberty, and incapable of appreciating it. And in both cases, so far as I have been able to observe, the assertions are equally unfounded.

War is, no doubt, fomented among the native tribes in the interior of Africa, on most occasions, for the purpose of dragging the vanquished into slavery; but it is also, if we may believe reports, sometimes entered upon for the mere thirst for combat—for the sake of plunder or revenge; and in that case, unless there is some means of disposing of the captives, they are inhumanly butchered, either on the field, or soon after battle. By affording this means, the slave traffic may have saved some thousands of lives at the expense of liberty. That this has been truly the state of the case occasionally, was ascertained by the officers of his Majesty's ship Primrose, if the following account, brought to Sierra Leone by them, is to be believed; and I have nót the slightest reason to doubt its accuracy, having made particular inquiry concerning it, although some sapiently sceptical individuals were pleased to question the truth of the statement, because it militated against their own

preconceived notions regarding the slave trade. During a short stay at Loango, about a year ago, the king of that place, Rey Meune Lumba, told them, "that if the English would trade for slaves as formerly, he could load eight ships in one week, and give each four or five hundred; but that, having now no means of disposing of the greater part of his prisoners, he was obliged to kill them." And shortly before the Primrose arrived, a great number of unfortunate wretches, who had been taken in a predatory incursion within the territories of a neighbouring tribe, in revenge of some imaginary insult, after having been made use of to carry loads of the plundered ivory, &c. from the place of capture to the coast, on their arrival there, as there was no market for them, and as the trouble and expense of their support would be considerable, were taken to the side of a hill, a little beyond the town, and coolly knocked on the head! Until Africa emerge from her present dark state of uncivilized barbarism—a period infinitely farther distant than can even be conjectured—it would really seem, on a first glance at these flagitious practices, that, instead of committing an inhuman act, the persons employed in the slave trade—although how different their object!—actually confer a benefit on the persecuted natives, by removing them from a country where might is right, and murder

is no crime. But there cannot be a doubt that the cupidity which the trade gives rise to, serves to augment these enormities, and, together with the imperfect laws enacted against it, adds, as has been already shewn, to the cruel treatment of the individual after he becomes a slave.

Presupposing, therefore, that the statement of the Primrose's officers is correct, and that many reports of a similar nature are founded in truth, it appears that the complete suppression of the slave trade, although it will be the first step towards quieting the distracted state of the interior of Africa, will not, as many suppose, entirely tranquillize the country. In savage life there will be wars and murder, without the slave trade as an exciting cause; and, besides, the suppression of the slave trade on this part of the African continent, would go but a short way towards the complete abolition of African slavery. Thousands of human beings are annually carried from the interior of this desolated land to the Indian Ocean, the Red Sea, Egypt, and the shores of the Mediterranean, concerning whom no interest seems to have been hitherto excited, and for whose amelioration no measures have ever been contemplated.

Besides the abolition of slavery, something else must, therefore, be done to prevent the intestine wars and murderous devastation of Inner Africa, by illuminating the mental darkness of her

children. The first step towards this would seem to be an endeavour on the part of our benevolent government, to acquire and keep up a constant and friendly intercourse with the chiefs on the different parts of the coast, and in the interior, for the purpose of obtaining certain stipulations to this end, and introducing teachers, so that the people's minds may be prepared in some measure to receive and understand the doctrines of Christianity. A few presents annually to the chiefs would ensure these benefits to the native African, and many enterprising, enlightened, and philanthropic individuals, might be found in England, willing to risk their lives in furthering so commendable an object.*

But when will the diabolical traffic in human beings, even on this part of the African continent,

* The mercantile expedition which has left England, since the above was written, for the newly discovered mouth of the Niger, if successful, will be the commencement of a new era in the history of Africa. By this channel, civilization, which has hitherto but partially illumined its widely-extended coast, will be carried into the heart of the country, and commerce will give the death-blow to the interior slave trade, by supplying the powerful chiefs with British manufactures and European luxuries, for the produce of their own country, which they have hitherto chiefly obtained from the Moorish caravans crossing the desert, in exchange for slaves. Industry will thus be fostered—the chief will discover that it is his interest to protect, instead of being a blood-thirsty oppressor, and the traffic in human flesh will die a natural death.

be annihilated, and the first progression made towards the goal of civilization? For to attempt to humanize Africa before this is done, must be wholly useless. Alas! the period seems as far distant as ever. France will do nothing towards it: under her flag there are ten vessels to one of any other nation engaged in the slave trade. During the month of October last, (1830,) his Majesty's brig Black Joke boarded five French vessels, with one thousand six hundred and twenty-two slaves on board, from the river Bonny alone; and in the month of November following, there were ten French vessels lying in the Old Calebar river, ready to take slaves on board, the smallest of which would embark four hundred. She could not detain one of them: indeed, had her officer strictly attended to the letter, or even the spirit of our feeble treaty with France, (than which nothing requires a more strict revision,) he must have known that he was not permitted even to *board* any vessel under French colours. So complete is the immunity of slave vessels sailing under this flag, owing to the disabilities under which our ships of war labour, and the perfect idleness and inactivity of the Gallic squadron, and so comparatively subversive are the laws enacted against the traffic to *the northward* of the equator by every other power under whose flag it has hitherto been carried on, that, before long, there

is not a doubt but the *tricolor*,—the banner of liberty—the vindicator of the rights of men!—under whose auspices so many diabolical murders have been perpetrated, such mad acts of injustice committed, and such insults and indignities offered to the sober reason of half the civilized world—the *tricolor* will, ere long, be the only flag employed to carry on the slave trade, and under this it will flourish, unless France is forced to grant the right of search—at least on the coast of Africa—and the right to capture all vessels under her flag fitted for the reception of slaves, or having slaves actually on board. Our treaty with Portugal is almost equally faulty. By the articles of this treaty, we are disabled from capturing any vessel under Portuguese colours to the southward of the equator, although crowded with slaves.

Were there no obstacles to the suppression of the slave trade—were every vessel, of whatever nation, found fitted for, or engaged in it, liable to capture—were our squadron on the coast, small as it is, ordered to go on in the glorious work of emancipation, without fear of risk by legal processes and diplomatic squabbles, and entirely unhampered—were the simple unfettered order, "Suppress the slave trade," issued by government to the officer commanding our ships of war here,—there is not the slightest doubt that the trade on this part

of the coast would be immediately and permanently put an end to. Not a single vessel could escape us. While it is otherwise, all our exertions are a mere farce—a perfect mockery of emancipation. We liberate a few of those embarked in Spanish vessels, while tens of thousands are embarked, and the vessels allowed insolently to pass us unmolested, under the infamous shelter of the French flag to the northward of the equator, and the Portuguese flag to the southward. Upwards of sixty thousand slaves, it is calculated, are annually exported from Africa. In 1826, we emancipated only two thousand five hundred and sixty-seven; in 1827, two thousand eight hundred and sixty-one; in 1828, three thousand nine hundred and twenty-four; and in 1829, five thousand three hundred and fifty were liberated, being a year of uncommon success, which arose from the great number of Brazilian vessels running prior to the operation of the convention of 1826, which made the trade under the Brazilian flag piracy. Since then, no vessel has appeared under that flag on the coast. * In 1830 the number consequently again fell off; and in the present year little or nothing can be done. Almost every vessel laden with slaves is under the French

* See list of slave vessels captured, at the end of the volume.

flag, and the people on board, confident of being privileged, literally laugh at us as they pass, and often favour the escape of vessels under another flag liable to capture, by leading us a dance after them. But, besides the many other impediments to the complete suppression of the slave trade, while the captains of his Majesty's ships are liable to heavy damages for the detention of vessels with slaves on board, which are subsequently, by a decision of the Courts of Mixed Commission, declared, in accordance with the treaties, to be illegally detained, which not unfrequently happens, there must be much hesitation in the minds of these men concerning the detention of vessels whose cases are at all doubtful; and those illegally employed have, no doubt, often been allowed to escape in consequence of the heavy expenses which may be incurred should they not be condemned. It is therefore evident, that all attempts at suppressing the slave trade under the present system is a mere farce,—that all our expenditure for that purpose is fruitlessly—nay, in many instances, injuriously—employed.

CHAPTER IV.

Our recently formed settlement at Fernando Po consists of ten or twelve capacious, airy, whitewashed buildings of wood, ranged along the brow of a somewhat precipitous cliff, forming one side of a narrow strip of land, jutting out like a deformed limb from the island, and terminating abruptly in a shelving point, called Point William, which protects the little bay denominated Clarence Cove, in which we are anchored; from the violence of those heavy squalls, known by the name of tornadoes, so common on this coast. A few of these buildings are occupied by the officers of the establishment, who consist at present of a superintendent, formerly master of a merchant vessel trading here, an ensign of the Royal African Corps, and two naval assistant-surgeons. The rest are used as an hospital, a barrack for the Royal African Corps, and storehouses. Near the point are a few huts, inhabited by the industrious Kroumen employed as labourers; and behind the above range of government buildings is a village of the

Africans, liberated and located here by Captain Owen, round which the ground is pretty well cleared, and the gardens in a very fair state of cultivation. The huts are formed in a manner similar to those at Sierra Leone, but are covered with bamboo instead of grass, and wattled by broad and thin pieces of wood instead of twigs, and have not quite so pleasing an appearance. Two public gardens, belonging to the establishment, are well laid out, and contain a number of tropical fruit trees and plants,—the one placed on Adelaide Point, west of the Cove; the other behind the principal building in the settlement: which, from its being occupied by the Superintendent, has obtained the name of Government House. There are about one thousand persons in the settlement, including Europeans, of whom there are, at present, only twenty-five; Royal African Corps, forty; the rest liberated Africans and Kroumen, with their wives and children. Seven hundred of these black people are employed about the various public works going on, and are paid and fed by Government, provisions being sent out from England for that purpose. The quantity of food reared in the colony is quite insufficient for the support of its inhabitants, so that by any accidental delay in the arrival of a transport from England, they are wholly dependent upon the opposite coast for support, whence they derive a supply

of yams and fresh meat. But, notwithstanding, the progress of cultivation in the colony seems to go on very slowly. The utmost extent of the settlement, including the cleared ground, as well as the space occupied by public and private buildings, is barely three miles in circumference. All beyond is a dense forest, the trees of which are of enormous magnitude, and are found highly useful and substantial in building. The chief of these is a red wood resembling mahogany, but generally coarser grained, and a dense and heavy yellowish white wood, which, however, has the disadvantage of becoming pithy, and splitting or renting after a short time. The *ricinus communis*, or castor oil plant, grows wild in great abundance.

At the head of Maidstone Bay, a little to the westward of the settlement, there is some low, swampy ground,—three or four muddy, sluggish brooks, bordered by many hundred acres of mangrove and jungle, extending, in some instances, even to the very centre of the dull stream, as is the case in most other African rivers. The vapours from these must be most injurious to health, particularly as the sea breeze blows directly over them before it reaches the Cove. Also, to the eastward of the town, there is a stagnant pool at no great distance—a narrow running stream or two, and some low, wet land of a similar description to that in the

neighbourhood of Maidstone Bay; but neither merit the name of a marsh, although, perhaps, equally injurious to health. In fact, so far as salubrity is concerned, it appears to me that no worse situation for the settlement could have been found upon the island. The sickly earthy smell, which I spoke of at Porto Antonio, and the effluvium of dead and decaying vegetable matter at Sierra Leone, are, at this settlement, most powerful and offensive, particularly when the wind blows off shore, which it very generally does during the night. At present, the cases of fever in the hospital are very numerous; and, besides these, there are a great number of patients afflicted with ulcers, said, by the medical people on shore, (who affect to be very sanguine as to the salubrity of the island,) to have been contracted on different parts of the continent, and brought here in merchant vessels for cure. In opposition to this, however, I have seven Kroumen at present under my care, who belonged to his Majesty's ship Medina, afflicted with extensive phagedænic ulcers of the most obstinate nature, all of which were originally scratches, met with while cutting firewood on the island, and none of which, although dressed almost immediately, and strictly attended to, ever shewed any tendency to heal; and with respect to the production of fever, the facts above stated are sufficiently conclusive. The

purser of the Atholl narrowly escaped death, and has been sent home that his life may be preserved. The man sent on board here from the tender has recovered, but continues in such a debilitated state that he, too, must ultimately be sent to England.

No beasts of prey have been seen on the island. A small species of deer is rather plentiful; but by no means delicate or rich in flavour. Numbers of these are brought in every Saturday by the workmen, who are allowed the afternoon, as a half-holiday, when each shoulders a musket, and turns sportsman. A large species of monkey is also brought in for sale, which is used as food by the blacks in the settlement, and considered by them as excellent eating. The whole of the bullocks in the settlement are brought over from the river Calebar, although it is reported that there are plenty of wild cattle in the mountains. This, however, I believe to be doubtful, as they have never been seen by any person belonging to the settlement. The former are very small—from sixty to one hundred and sixty pounds each—though the beef is very good. The whole of the goats, pigs, and poultry, are also brought over from the continent; but barely enough for the use of the inhabitants. So few, indeed, can be spared, that it is with difficulty we can now and then

obtain a castrated goat, to supply the place of mutton. Before we had an establishment at this place, the natives sold yams and poultry, in the greatest abundance, to ships touching here, and at an uncommonly reasonable rate: now yams are not to be had; and a lean fowl sells for a dollar. This is one of the first advantages of colonization. Of the birds, the rhinoceros, or helmet hornbill, and a large bird, called the Fernando Po pheasant, about the same size and shape of the pheasant of Britain, with brown and black feathers, a black crest, and short broad yellow beak, are the most remarkable, and are very numerous. The call of the former resembles the braying of an ass, being almost equally loud and discordant, to contribute to which, Nature has, no doubt, placed the immense unseemly protuberance on the beak from which it receives its name. The two-horned chameleon is also frequently met with in the woods. The water of Clarencetown, Fernando Po, is by no means bad, whatever may have been said to the contrary; but the supply is not sufficient to meet a large and hurried demand, such as is often necessarily made by our ships of war. This, however, will soon be remedied, as a cistern is building over the streamlet a little to the westward of the public buildings, in which the water will be collected. There being

considerable inconvenience and difficulty experienced by ships in watering at the running stream, on the opposite side of the settlement, this is almost always made use of. But the water is certainly not the best in the world: it is not to be compared to that of Prince's Island; and, accordingly, all our ships of war prefer supplying themselves from thence when it is at all possible. A sort of Justice Court is held here twice a-week, for the porpose of settling disputes among the black residents—the office of arbiter or judge on these occasions being performed by each of the officers of the settlement in succession; and a ridiculous enough scene it is sometimes! On Sunday, every one employed on the establishment is made to attend at Longfield House, a public storehouse, where, for the present, the Superintendent performs divine service. The clean, neat, and orderly appearance of the blacks, and the decent attention paid by them on these occasions to the solemn service in which they are engaged, call forth the encomiums of every one who has witnessed them. I wonder that some of the numerous religious societies at home have not, before this, sent out here a few of their members in the good work of conversion, or that some pious person, eager after religious fame, has not, before this, had zeal enough to venture out of his own accord.

It is not, surely, because the climate is deadly and pestilential?

The aboriginal inhabitants of the island, (who have obtained the name of boobies and coocoolacoos from their new neighbours, owing to certain words which they are in the frequent habit of making use of when they desire to be friendly,) are a strong, active, vivacious, and shrewd race of men, but by no means industrious; for nature produces all the necessaries of life in abundance, with so little cultivation, that labour and exertion are almost matters of supererogation. Covetousness and impudence appear to be the two most prominent features in their character—filth and stench, in consequence of their present mode of dress, are peculiarities inseparable from their persons. Their visits to the new settlement are very frequent; but are never made, unless it is to beg for something—whatever they see, and deem curious and useful, such as axes, muskets, fish-hooks, nails, old iron, &c. Bodies of fifteen or twenty—chiefs and their "tails"—make their appearance on these occasions; and after getting all they can from the intruders on their soil, they march back into the interior, without burdening the donors with their thanks, or even shewing that they have any sense of the obligation. There is, however, a very friendly understanding between them and the persons connected with our esta-

blishment, who venture frequently many miles into the interior, and feel themselves perfectly safe among them. Those of the natives that I have seen near the coast, seem very jealous of a near approach to their houses, which are mere sheds formed of a few upright poles, and a roof of bamboo or grass, containing numbers of small hand-nets, calabashes, fishing-rods, wooden spears, &c. They were always on the begging system, importuning us for rum, (the name of which they seem to have got very ready,) and whatever else we had about us. In these huts, trees hollowed out in the form of troughs, served the purposes of beds, in which they sleep dry and safe from the pools of water on each side, during the heavy periodical rains. They always shake hands on meeting and at parting,—a barbarous custom, also practised by civilized nations of the north, from whom, I suppose, it is derived. The females are, in general, very shy and reserved. In practising the above custom, they shrink from a near approach, or any thing like close contact, and stretch out their right arm at full length, keeping the extremes of the body as far removed from the individual so favoured, as its elasticity will permit. A chaste salute would be no such desirable matter, coated, as they are, with clay and palm oil. But for all this affected modesty, several of them, doffing their ornamental dress

of oil and clay, have come to the settlement, where they are at present living with the Kroumen in a state of concubinage; in consequence of which they are *cut* by their friends and countrymen. These are the only signs of an approach to the practices of civilized society which I have observed amongst them.

Numbers of their canoes are seen paddling daily towards some favourite fishing ground, armed with long barbed or crenated spears of tough wood, and small hand-nets, the principal weapons with which they make war upon the finny tenants of the deep. A hook to them is a treasure, and, with a line attached to it, is the handsomest "dash" * one can make to a native of Fernando Po. These canoes are all ornamented with rude carved work externally. The stern is irregularly square, "swims in the water," and still shews the marks of the rude axe, which levelled the tree out of which it had been formed, while the prow, in which there is always placed upright a long slender reed, having a tuft of dry grass dangling from its waving top, and another near its middle, by way of *fetiche*, rises at a very acute angle from the water, and overhangs it for several feet almost horizontally, terminating in a sharp or rounded point. Several of these poor fisher-

* "Dash" is the word used among the blacks all along the coast, in their strange jargon, for "a present."

men came unhesitatingly on board, and paid us a visit, some days after our arrival. The leading men in these canoes were usually the tallest and best looking individuals of the motley crew, a remark which also applies to the chiefs on shore, who are in general much taller, more muscular, active, and shrewd than their humbler countrymen. The moment they came on board, they seemed to make themselves quite at home; very coolly walked down below to the gun-room, and demanded something to drink, in which they were humoured. They then made signs that they wanted to take our cups on shore with them to drink out of, but this could not be so readily granted, there being no porcelain manufactory on the coast of Africa; and they evinced some impatience at our refusal; but they soon regained their equanimity.

Watchaco, the chief of the first canoe that came on board, called by the seamen "Happy Jack," from his lively manner and remarkable *nonchalance*, and Woussa, one of his men, affording pretty good specimens of the costume and character of their countrymen, I shall attempt to describe their general appearance. Besmeared, from head to foot, with a reddish clay mixed with palm oil, their hair in thick plaits, matted with the same, and dangling in solid lumps half-way down the neck, they presented a most foul appearance, while their

bodies exhaled a most noisome and offensive odour. Their heads were covered with dirty saucer-shaped hats of straw, rather finely platted, fastened on by means of an iron skewer stuck through the hat, and the greasy wool of their crowns. Watchaco's was ornamented with numerous dark-coloured, dirty feathers, and bits of bullock's horn intermingled. The face of each was full of horizontal cicatrices, about two inches in length, and half an inch broad, from ornamental wounds inflicted with some sharp instrument during childhood—certainly a most painful series of operations. The eyes peered through a mound of clay raised round the socket, and the layer of filth on the face was distinguishable by the numerous cracks and *scoriæ* on its surface. Besides these facial embellishments, which add considerably to their savage appearance, each had numerous tattoed marks on the surface of the abdomen, round the navel, and also over the scapulæ, or shoulder blades. Twisted rings of straw and hide, studded with small bits of shell and beads, ornamented their necks, arms, waists, and lower extremities; and a small mat of straw, or a tuft of grass, and a piece of monkey skin, with the hair outwards, fastened round the middle by strings of beads or straps of leather, barely sufficed to cover that which decency requires to have concealed. The chiefs on shore are generally distinguished

by the size of these decorations; many of them having their waists and extremities circled with belts of shells and beads several inches in breadth. They are likewise distinguished from the "mobility" by the larger number of feathers in their hats, and by a staff which they are seldom or never without, six or seven feet long, surmounted with feathers, and a variety of *fetiches*. Many of the natives whom I have seen on shore had the hair shaved from the back of the head, temples, and upper part of the forehead. Others had the whole hair cut quite short, with the exception of a small upright tuft just above the forehead; and nearly all carried a rude knife, stuck between the skin and the ring of shells, or straw, which encircled the left arm, immediately above the elbow. The women are dressed and ornamented in a manner nearly similar; their only covering is, in general, a leaf. Canoes occasionally pass the ship, paddled by females alone, quite as loquacious as any coterie of the same number of their better clothed and fairer sex in England. So much for their costume.

As I have already said, no one could justly accuse Watchaco and his followers of modesty or diffidence; for they asked for every thing, and drank as much spirits as they could get—and that was a quantity sufficient to have intoxicated twice as many hard-headed,

whisky-drinking Scotsmen; but although they gulped it down undiluted, it seemed to have no more effect upon them than as much water, and they demanded more. They did not offer any to their fellows in charge of the canoe, lying alongside, but seemed afraid, while they were drinking on deck, lest these should come up and ask a share of the potent draught; and accordingly they swallowed the whole as fast as possible, casting their eyes to the gangway occasionally, to see whether they were observed. Each spoke a word or two of English, and asked repeatedly after Captain Owen, who they all seem to regard with much respect and esteem. They tried to imitate us in every thing—walking the deck beside us—laughing when we did—and making use of the same gestures, and repeating, as nearly as they were able, the orders given on board, in the same tone and manner. We furled sails just as they left the ship, when the officer carrying on the duty hailed the main-top for some purpose or other,—"Main-top there!" was vehemently re-echoed from the canoe. The officer was again under the necessity of loudly execrating the optics of some poor devil who had come under his severe displeasure, as is customary in nautical operations,—"D—n your eyes!" was immediately vociferated from the canoe, with the most ludicrous mimicry of the

same angry tone and gesticulation, which they themselves seemed to relish so much, that they all burst into a loud laugh, as if in derision of our barbarous and uncivilized gabble, and then paddled on shore, apparently much pleased with their visit.

The soil of this island is eminently superior to that of the peninsula of Sierra Leone, and the extent of arable surface is infinitely greater. From its vast height, it must have various climates,—an advantage which the diminutive mountains of Sierra Leone do not possess. Like all new settlements within the tropics, it must and will be unhealthy, until the ground is cleared, drained, and cultivated; and those who, being first on the soil, have to perform these laborious operations, must make up their minds to pay the penalty of their adventurousness with loss of health and life, while those who succeed them must reap the benefit of their exertions; but it may, at some distant period, have this advantage over Sierra Leone, inconsiderable as it may be thought, namely—a retreat formed in a temperate climate, high up the mountain, where the sick could be sent for recovery, as is the case in the Blue Mountains of Jamaica; although an obstacle might be suggested to this in the great distance of the high land from the present situation of the settlement. The loss of life before this

can be effected must be enormous; and the question to be considered is, whether the advantage to be derived from it is worth the sacrifice. This is the great, and only objection to a settlement at Fernando Po; but even the existence of the dreadful fatality of its climate is denied in the most barefaced manner, in opposition to the strongest and most undeniable facts, by some silly individuals, whose senses are warped by the interested medium through which they view the subject. I learn that the order-book of one of these very persons, who for some time did the duty of superintendent, is still to be seen here, and contains the two following orders, as nearly verbatim as I can remember, both of which are strongly corroborative of his sentiments regarding the healthful enjoyments of the inhabitants of Clarencetown, Fernando Po. He had divided his working people into gangs, which were numbered, and ordered upon different duties, in the following manner: "Gang No. 1, to be employed digging graves as usual—Gang No. 2, making coffins till farther orders!"

There is ground enough to locate many more than all the slaves we shall ever liberate, without interfering with, or affecting, the interests of the natives, who, I have reason to believe, are by no means so numerous as has been represented. The number has been estimated

at forty thousand; but any such calculation must be altogether arbitrary. Besides the assistance which the island may afford to our cruizers engaged in suppressing the slave trade, no one can shut his eyes to the advantages which the island, were it not for its fatality, might ultimately possess as a commercial station. It is a key to all the magnificent streams which, traversing the undiscovered continent of Africa, empty themselves into the Bight of Biafra. The possibility of penetrating these with the assistance of steam, and the probability of acquiring much information that is interesting in the imperfect history of the interior, as well as of discovering many sources of wealth hitherto unheard of, are matters by no means Utopian. Few slave vessels can arrive in those rivers without the occurrence being speedily known at the island, by means of the constant communication kept up with the main, chiefly by Liverpool traders, and their tenders, or through the medium of two colonial schooners, which are in the habit of making frequent visits there, for the purpose of obtaining a supply of yams and live stock for the use of the settlement. It was owing to this constant communication that the Black Joke received intelligence of, and was consequently enabled to capture, the Marinerito; and she is about to proceed to cruize off the river Bonny, in consequence of

information, similarly received, of a Spanish brig and schooner lying there, ready to take slaves on board. But under the existing laws relative to the slave trade, this advantage which the island possesses is of secondary consideration. This very intelligence which is about to despatch the tender, serves to shew the humbug and inefficiency of the laws and treaties having for their object the suppression of the slave trade. Here are two vessels fitted for the reception of slaves, and anchored at a notorious slave port, ready to take on board their wretched victims, whenever the number which it is possible to crowd into their holds shall be brought from the interior; and we, although fully aware that they are so fitted, and that such is their intention, cannot legally prevent the inhuman act; when, with the greatest ease imaginable, were the dictates of humanity not obstructed by the cold-blooded arm of the law, our tender, or our boats, might enter the river, capture or destroy them, and thereby effectually prevent them from accomplishing their nefarious purpose. But no: the poor Africans must be suffered to be collected together in the "factory," like cattle, until the numerous cargo is completed—we must suffer them to be shipped and subjugated to every horror, and to all the degradation of the slavehold—we must permit, and, in a manner, countenance a crime, which we know

is about to be perpetrated, of the most diabolical nature, when it might be so easily prevented! Were the commanders of his Majesty's ships, as I have said before, to act otherwise, the most heavy pecuniary penalties would be awarded against them by the law. Therefore, until, as has been already said, the slave trade shall be held, by a law of nations, to be piracy, and until all vessels found fitted for the purpose of carrying it on shall be held to have actually engaged in it, all our efforts to put a stop to the vile traffic must be entirely fruitless. The establishment of the Courts of Mixed Commission at Fernando Po, under the present treaties, must be an act highly serviceable to the cause of humanity, so far as the slaves are concerned; but I question whether the members of these courts would think its interests consulted in their own case. To these courts, every slave vessel captured must be sent for adjudication; and as the principal marts for carrying on the trade are the ports and rivers in the Bights of Benin and Biafra, near this island, the slaves might then be all landed, and submitted for adjudication, two or three days after capture; whereas, the passage thence to Sierra Leone, where the Courts at present reside, occupies usually three weeks or a month—and instances have been known of three months—during which, as will be seen by the list of captures appended to the

volume, the mortality is often frightful — diseases, from crowding and privations of every description, making most appalling ravages. To be sure, the trade is pretty extensively carried on in the neighbourhood of Sierra Leone; but then, the passage thence to Fernando Po does not occupy much more than one-half the period which it does in the other direction — the winds being generally favourable.

In point of insalubrity, I believe there is not such a very material difference between this island and Sierra Leone, as has been represented. They are both bad enough in that respect. The older residents at Sierra Leone were tormented with ague: so are they here. Occasional cases of remittent fever occurred, and occasional deaths in consequence: so have they here, as we have already seen; but it must be recollected, that the whites are as nothing in point of numbers to those at Sierra Leone. It is pretty well established, I believe, that the better and more extensively cleared a tropical country is of wood, jungle, and swamp, the better it is drained, and the better cultivated, it is proportionately more healthy, whatever may be the impalpable cause of fever. All this has yet to be effected at Fernando Po. At Sierra Leone, a very great part of this has been done, but not so much as one would have been led to expect from the remote period of its establish-

ment as a colony; therefore, the insalubrity of its climate may be, in proportion, less than that of its rival establishment at Fernando Po. Where both are so very bad, it is a matter of some nicety to say, with confidence, which is worst. Of this, however, I am, on the strongest evidence, and from all that I have observed myself, perfectly satisfied that the boasted salubrity of Fernando Po is totally without foundation; but as our visits here will be frequent, there will be no want of opportunities of clearly ascertaining whether this be the fact or not. I am told by the present Superintendent, that, during the whole of last year, they had a hundred and thirty-three days with occasional heavy showers, but no long-continued rain. At Sierra Leone, I was also told, that the rain continued for at least as long a period, and that it poured down sometimes for two or three days without intermission—without even a gleam of sunshine.

We left Fernando Po on the 11th May, and, after a short and unsuccessful cruize to the westward, as far as Cape St Paul's, for the purpose of intercepting slave vessels, we stood away for the Island of Anobona, where we arrived on the 29th. During the whole of this time we had almost perpetual rain; and, as the ship wanted caulking, from the shrinking of the wood by the preceding five or six months'

exposure to a hot sun, our very cabins were inundated, our books rendered nearly illegible, and almost every article we possessed was more or less injured. This is another and unlooked for misery added to the accumulation of pests to which we are subject on this miserable coast.

The Island of Anobona—in one degree twenty-two minutes south latitude, five degrees twenty-seven minutes forty-nine seconds east longitude—is about twenty-four miles in circumference, and its summit from two thousand to three thousand feet high. Its appearance, as we approach, is remarkably pleasing. Without either the romantic rocky outline of Prince's Island, or the deep forest shade of Fernando Po, its sunbright surface is surmounted by a few craggy and conical eminences, while its sloping sides consist of undulating hills, many of which are almost free from wood, and covered with waving grass embrowned by the sun, forming bright yellow glades, which relieve the deep green of the spreading groves and clumps of trees covering the other hills in their vicinity. These hills are intersected with dells and ravines, shaded with numerous tall trees and leafy shrubs,—deep and wide gullies formed by the original convulsion of Nature, but now bearing in their bosom the placid brook, or affording a bed to the rushing mountain torrents during the periodical rains. In many places

the island is steep and precipitous from the very beach. At others the ascent is more gradual; but, excepting a few acres in two or three places close to the sea shore, there is little or no level land, so far as I could observe, on the whole island.

We anchored near a considerable village, at the north-east end of the island. Upwards of one hundred and fifty canoes came out to meet us and "make trade;" bringing pigs, poultry, goats, eggs, yams, sweet potatoes, pine apples, bananas, plantains, limes, oranges, tamarinds, cassava bread, (in large, round, flat cakes, which many of the natives had placed upon their heads in room of hats, to keep the sun off,) dried fish, sponges, and shells. The canoes are formed of the trunks of trees hollowed, and coarsely executed. Most of them contained two or three individuals, tall, athletic blacks, having nothing different in their appearance from the natives of the coast, excepting that they had gold rings in their ears, beads and crosses, or rosaries, round their necks, and that they were all dressed in ragged shirts and trowsers, which they had obtained from vessels touching here, in exchange for provisions and articles of refreshment. Many of them spoke a few words of English, and the Portuguese language seemed to be pretty generally, but very imperfectly, understood. They are all of the religion of the Portuguese,

(only, however, a sort of mockery even of Roman Catholic absurdities,) who discovered and long retained the island, but afterwards ceded it to Spain, who has never had any footing on it whatever, so that at present there is not a single European resident or civilized person of any description on the island. The constant gabbling noise and clamour which, in their zeal to trade, the ragged inmates of the numerous canoes raised round the ship, was most deafening. Money seemed to be of no value, for they would not receive it, but looked upon old clothes as the staple commodity. Shirts, trowsers, and handkerchiefs were most in demand; but they seemed to have no idea of the relative value of these articles, and took especial care to give as little as possible for every thing, shewing an uncommon degree of cunning and shrewdness on all occasions, and a marked wish to impress us with a deep sense of their poverty,—"*Me poor fellow!*" was in every one's mouth. At length the King (who calls himself "Tom Standey, or Scandey") came on board, in a canoe, which shewed no superiority over the others in point of size or ornament. His majesty was a tall, thin personage, considerably on the wrong side of fifty. He was dressed in the cast off garments of some merchant skipper, viz. an old black beaver, blue coat, duck trowsers, reaching scarcely to the middle of

his leg, cotton stockings, that might once have been white and sound, but were now rather dingy, like his skin, and full of holes, with shoes of a most ponderous construction. He was distinguished from the *canaille* in the other canoes by a coarse cotton umbrella, of English manufacture, and was accompanied by only one attendant, who seemed to stick always close to the old gentleman, and gave himself out to be "Cocoa Jack," the King's Physician. This man of influence, while he basked in the smiles of royalty, afforded, even in savage life, an admirable specimen of the fawning, courtly sycophant. While he enjoyed his share of the good things, he seemed to have little regard for the feelings of his humbler brethren in the canoes, to whom he evinced a rooted antipathy, urging the weak old gentleman to thrust them out of his way, and to offer them other indignities in his passage alongside. The canoe-men seemed to burn with indignation; but their murmurs were scarcely listened to, although the frown of ineffable contempt met the pampered favourite on every side. His Majesty was ushered into the Commodore's cabin, where, after speedily discussing, with the assistance of his henchman, two or three bottles of wine, he was presented with a shirt, a dressing-gown, and a green night-cap, all of which he donned instantly, stripping to the buff, for that purpose, in the

presence of every one, without the slightest ceremony. We afterwards introduced him to the gun-room, but had good reason to repent of our complaisance. As long as there was any thing to drink, he did not evince the slightest inclination to budge one inch, and we were at length obliged, very unceremoniously, to hand him over the side, pretty nearly as drunk as a lord, to use a commoner's expression.

Some hours after King Tom left the ship, a few of us went on shore, and looked round the village. As there was a heavy surf on the sandy beach, we landed on some rocks to the right of the town, which form a sort of natural pier, and got on terra firma without the slightest difficulty. By his umbrella—which he always had expanded for distinction's sake, whether the sun was bright or clouded, whether it was noon or night—we observed his Majesty King Tom Standey, in the midst of a dense multitude of his black and ragged subjects, approaching to meet us. Before we had gone far, we were surrounded by at least fifteen hundred persons, men, women, and children, dressed every one according to his own fashion, in the cast off clothes of their civilized visitors. The poorer sort, however, and the women, had only the usual rag round the middle, and the children were perfectly naked. Here was one fellow with a tattered dress coat, and no other habiliment but

the above-mentioned rag, or *doty*—there another whose sole garment consisted of a cloak of shreds and patches, which, from its "cut," must have once seen better company—and yonder a party of "bloods," I suppose, by their dress being different from that of the more sober part of the community, consisting of inexpressibles only, but arranged in the most novel and fanciful manner, the legs being tied round the loins, and the waist and hinder parts of the garment hanging down before. His majesty, expecting a few presents, received us very graciously, and conducted us—surrounded, and half choked in the clouds of dust raised by all the subjects living in the vicinity of his court, collectively —to his royal residence, a wretched hovel, differing in no respect from the other huts in the village, where we were regaled with palm wine. A rude table was placed under the still ruder verandah of boughs before his door, and three or four chairs, of a construction quite unique, were placed round this for our party. A dirty, cloth was then laid, which had once apparently been a sheet, appertaining, perhaps, to the bed linen of some drunken skipper, and on this were placed two or three jugs and a tumbler, which one might conclude, from their appearance, had never been washed since they became the property of these unsophisticated ascii. These were filled with the fermented juice of

the palm, and we necessarily partook of it, his majesty setting us an excellent example, by quaffing a copious draught, and nodding us a welcome, with regal condescension; while his subjects in myriads surrounded the verandah, within three feet of us, shouldering each other, and almost suffocating us with heat, dust, and the peculiar offensive odour proceeding from their filthy carcasses, and stunning us with the incessant, loud, and discordant clatter of their tongues. They seemed to pay very little deference to the kingly authority. If one might judge from the noise and confusion, the general appearance of equality, the furious intrusion on the king's privacy, and some other mob manifestations of the excellence of liberty, there must certainly be a strong republican feeling among the subjects of his Majesty of Anobona, who, I was informed by the priest, or padre of the village, bears his blushing honours for no longer than a twelvemonth. He is elected annually; but should as many as ten vessels arrive at the island before his year of authority expires, he must resign, and another is appointed to hold the reins of government. This seems a mighty singular sort of anomaly in the forms of government, and is accounted for by the following circumstance. The only revenue which this chief, president, or king, or whatever else he may be called, receives, arises

from the presents made to him by those vessels which, like ourselves, happen to touch here for refreshments, it being an invariable practice throughout the whole coast of Africa to give the chief personage a "dash" on arriving and taking leave; and as this is the only means the King of this island has of acquiring riches, it is wisely provided that no single individual of the community shall grow too opulent, lest he also grow supercilious, and despise his poorer countrymen; but that all may have an equal chance of profiting by what fortune may throw in their way. The presents from ten vessels are therefore considered by the community to be quite a large enough share of the loaves and fishes for one individual, and on the departure of the tenth he is superseded; consequently there is no zeal wanting on his part in soliciting gifts, and making the most of the present opportunity of adding to his revenue. The importunities of his Majesty King Tom were, in consequence, most troublesome, and his impudence and assurance were occasionally most diverting, as will be presently seen.

We were given to understand by the King that a Spanish slave vessel had put in here some time ago, the crew of which having inveigled many of the natives on board to trade, tied them hand and foot, and put them in the hold; and, after murdering several people, and committing other

excesses on shore, carried them off. The degree of distrust and fear with which many of them, particularly the women and children, received us, may perhaps have been owing to this. They shewed an innate horror of weapons of any sort, particularly fire-arms. A few of them had large knives stuck in a belt fastened round their waist, but I saw no other sort of weapon among them. We sometimes took advantage of their terrors for the purpose of keeping them at a distance; and while we were pacing the different streets of the village, closely surrounded and annoyed by upwards of a thousand of them, one of our party amused himself by playing upon their fears in the following manner. He suddenly stopped, and fixed an angry look on the nearest of the dense mass. They likewise stopped, looked at each other and at him, and shrank back a little, while he continued his look of displeasure, and gradually raised his hand to his pocket as if in search of a weapon; they then fairly took to their heels, made one desperate rush, and tumbled over each other in their haste to get out of the way, when he withdrew his snuff-box from his pocket, and, laughing at the success of his exploit, took a hearty pinch; at which they all returned, joining loudly in the laugh at their own ridiculous fears, made him empty his box among them, and surrounded us, to our great discomfort,

much more closely, and with much more confidence, than they had done before. Several of them made anxious inquiries concerning Captain Botcler, who died on this coast some time ago, in command of his Majesty's surveying vessel Hecla, and evinced much concern when I informed them of his death. After taking leave of King Tom, whose avarice seemed to be as boundless as the ocean which encompassed his island throne, we returned to the ship.

The houses of this humble village are all miserable hovels, formed of boards fixed in the ground, roofed with bamboo or grass, and consisting of two apartments, with hardly any furniture besides a few boards to sleep on, a coarse table, some chairs or stools, and a few calabashes or jugs to eat and drink out of. The village is placed just above the sea beach; and although of no very considerable size, yet, from what we saw and experienced, it must contain a very numerous population. The houses are placed irregularly, and, with few exceptions, have no gardens adjoining, the cultivated ground being on the sides of the hills just above them. The streets, such as they are, are wide and eminently filthy, and crowded with various kinds of domestic animals, such as dogs, goats, hogs, poultry, &c. To the right of the village stands the church, a large remarkable shed, and the only remarkable building in the place, formed

of plank, and thatched like the huts, but occupying as much space as ten or twelve of the latter.

There is something connected with a place devoted to religious worship, however humble, and whatever may be the form of the religion cherished within its walls, for which no one can actually *feel* scorn or contempt, let his expressions and his demeanour savour ever so much of ridicule. However gorgeous or paltry, rational or absurd, the appliances and means of each may be, they have all but one and the same end, namely, the worship of a Supreme Being — of some incomprehensible essence — concerning whose attributes and power, the wisest of us, in our insolence of reason, can literally know nothing. We were unable to resist a feeling of veneration and respect, as we entered this sacred edifice — the poorest and most lowly of all which the "Scarlet Lady" can claim as her own; but it was impossible to repress a smile — certainly not a sneer — at the clumsily carved, coarsely painted, and tawdry dressed, little figures of Saints, which were placed at one end of the long empty shed, on a sort of elevated platform, surrounded by a rough wooden paling, which served the purpose of an altar. Polichinello and his associates are models of art to these. There was, however, one figure of the crucifixion carved in ivory, and beautifully executed, which had most probably been brought

over from Brazil by the priests, who were, in general, educated there, when the Portuguese had possession of the island. The priest, or padre, of the village, an old black, dressed in a cassock of coarse blue and gray striped cloth, who could neither read nor write, but seemed to possess more influence among his demi-savage flock than even his Majesty King Tom, introduced us into his sanctum sanctorum behind the altar, and shewed us several trunks, containing the tawdry vestments, and other trappings of popish ceremony, and a few books in the Portuguese language, among which I found a treatise on the sacraments, upwards of one hundred years old. These things have most probably remained here since the Portuguese evacuated the island, although this, too, is doubtful; for Brazilian vessels, engaged in the slave trade, were in the frequent habit of touching here for water and fresh supplies, until the year before last, when the trade under that flag became piracy.

No place appeared to be sacred from the noisy intrusion of the natives but this little spot within the paling which surrounds the altar. They had followed and surrounded us every where, but here they stopped, and some of them crossed themselves, and seemed to mutter something like a prayer, and shewed a degree of awe and reverence which I had not

given them credit for. On leaving the church, I encountered a person calling himself the schoolmaster, who I also afterwards found could neither read nor write, but was much in want of pens, ink, and paper, to enable him, as he told me by way of explanation, the better to teach the "picaninnys b-a, ba—b-e, be—b-o, bo." In this consisted all his knowledge of a schoolmaster's duty.

These poor people appear to be fond of imitating European manners and customs; and it seems to me, that as the Portuguese had a priest and didasculus when in possession of the island, they have thought it necessary, in the simplicity of their emulation, to continue the form at least, because it is European, and gives the person so denominated a certain degree of consequence, although they are entirely ignorant of almost every thing connected with the duties of their offices. They have had delivered down to them by their predecessors some of the forms of religion, and a sprinkling of the methods of education practised by their first civilized masters, as well as some account of the deference paid by them to the professors of religion and education, and perhaps think that by continuing such forms, they obtain favour in the sight of their white visitors, determined at least to resemble them in some things, though they appear to be considered superior to themselves in most matters. I see

no other way of accounting for this kind of schoolboy's game among them, of Priest and Pedagogue, the present individuals, so called, being little better than the half-naked savages I have just attempted to describe—of course deplorably ignorant, and incapable of imparting any instruction, having themselves had no opportunity of obtaining it. The priest told us that there were several other villages on the island, but none so large as this. We found that nine of the prize's crew, lately taken by the Black Joke, and landed here by the Atholl, had gone in three canoes, to endeavour to reach the Island of St Thomas, and that the rest were still here, and busily employed constructing a boat to carry them to the same place. They derived their chief subsistence by the sale of their clothes (of which they had a good supply) to the natives for provisions, and were lodged in the different huts of the village.

After getting on board, I made an engagement with one of my messmates, to start early in the morning for the highest part of the island, where we understood there was a fresh water lake situated, and such magnificent scenery to be met with, as would repay us for all the trouble and fatigue of the undertaking. Accordingly, taking a fowling-piece each, and a couple of Kroumen belonging to the ship to attend us, we started at six o'clock, and, not knowing of any road or pathway, took a direct

course up the steep acclivity behind the village. After passing through some groves of guava trees, abounding in ripe fruit, we entered a large space of several hundred acres, on the side of the mountain, devoid of trees, and covered with loose masses of cinder and lava, the interstices and decomposed parts of which were prolific in rank weeds and long rye-grass. Here we roused up several wild guinea fowl, and let fly a few shots among them, but barely near enough, with our small "sparrow hail," to "ruffle their feathers." Passing this, we had to cross two very deep, precipitous, and dark ravines, which were, luckily for us, beset pretty thickly with trees and shrubs, by clinging to which, we scrambled up and down their steep sides, without breaking our necks. Here we shot some wood-pigeons, whose noisy cooings indicated that they were pretty numerous among the bushes and clefts. The bottom of these dens and gloomy recesses of nature were dried up; but, from the broad beds of large washed stones which they contained, the water from the hills must rush through them in the rainy months with immense impetuosity and volume. Surmounting these obstacles, we at length stumbled on a narrow footpath winding up the mount, through numerous small plantations of cassada and pine apples, which conducted us to the verge of the desired object of our

expedition. On reaching this, and looking back at the direct ascent we had pursued, the distance we were from the village did not seem to exceed a mile and a half; although, from the difficulties we met with in threading our way through the long grass, in some places six feet high, and in penetrating the thick brushwood, the enterprise had occupied nearly two hours, and cost us not a few bruises, and cuticular abrasions; but we were amply repaid for all. The scenery which presented itself to our admiring gaze, on the first glimmering of the lake's smooth white bosom, through the dense and deep green foliage of the trees fringing the sloping margin of the vast mountain basin which contained it, was splendid beyond description. We had mounted a mile and a half of the direct steep ascent from the village, and we now stood upon the crest of a sloping bank, covered with bushes, lofty palms, and cultivated groves of orange trees and plantains, through which we could see the expansive sheet of water, placid as the evening sky of autumn, without a cloud, and glistening through the dark bosom of the forest, like the bright moonbeams as they penetrate the chinks and cracks which time has made in the walls of some dark, desolate, and tottering ruin. Down this we rushed for about fifty yards, and stood with our feet at the very brink of the lake, and inhaled

with much enjoyment the cool refreshing breeze that gently rippled over its quiet surface, parched and heated as we were by our exertions, and the close and sickly atmosphere of the woods we had just passed. But even here we could only see a small part of the opposite shore, the different species of palms, parasites, acacias, &c. hung over, and grew out of, its margin, in such countless numbers, and so closely interwoven, in every direction. I mounted one of these, but Nature had been so unsparing of her leafy ornaments, that some noble specimen of verdant luxuriance was constantly interposed between me and a full view of the whole extent of the lake. Almost despairing of success, I descended, and traversed a footpath describing its circumference, and at length discovered two or three canoes, in a little creek, under some bushes, from which one of the natives, on seeing us, rushed to the woods in great alarm; but the young savage returned when he heard us laughing and calling to him, and saw us making signs that we wished to be friendly. This rencontre was quite unexpected. All had hitherto been so still and calm that we imagined there was not a single living creature near us. Taking advantage, however, of the discovery, I leapt into one of the crazy barks, taking with me my Krou attendant, and paddled to the middle of the lake, from which I had an

excellent view of the surrounding scenery, and of the lagoon itself, in all its bearings, owing to its circular shape. It is nearly three miles in circumference, and lies in a deep cup-shaped concavity, formed by the surrounding hills, the steep internal acclivity of which is clothed with one continued unbroken grove, and terminates in a circular ridge of unequal height, o'ertopped by trees, the loftiest part of which is on the south-west side of the basin, or the side opposite to that on which we entered, and is, with the exception of a conical mount in its vicinity, the loftiest part of the island that can be seen from the anchorage, being about five or six hundred feet in height from the brink of the lake. From the outside of this circular ridge, and beyond the eastern boundary of the lake, the isolated, conical, rocky mount just mentioned, suddenly emerges out of the never-dying green with which every other spot around it is covered, and with its bare, precipitous sides, and grassy, treeless summit, forms an agreeable contrast with all the gay profusion of Nature which surrounds it. Encircled by every thing that is pleasing to the eye, and in the midst of so much wanton exuberance of verdure, such a bare and barren rock as this, with a beetling brow, like the green oases of the desert, is quite refreshing; for the sight, like the other senses, may be so sated with enjoyment, by repeated

gloating on the same changeless and unvaried object, eternally lovely and agreeable, as to become morbidly painful; and life itself, every body knows, without its miseries, by way of a fillip or set off, to teach us how to enjoy its blessings, would become so insipid that it would hardly be safe to trust any man beyond the age of thirty within reach of a fathom of rope, a razor, or a millpond. In this cool and sequestered, and, I am persuaded, healthy region, with a house on the diverging bank, and a skiff on the lake, a man, anxious to be disentangled from the whirling eddies of a noisy, turbulent existence, may meet with uninterrupted peace and repose, amidst the retirement which these shades afford, and the mute tranquillity which prevails around. If unhappy, it would be his own fault; for to search for happiness "with a mind diseased," is about as rational an attempt as for a man with a hump on his back to try to run away from it.

The immense natural basin which contains the lake bears strong evidence of having been the crater of a volcano long ago extinguished. Masses of cinders and lava are found in every direction around it, partially decomposed; and the footpath by which we returned to the village crossed in one or two places a bed or torrent of lava, that had congealed in eddies, forming concentric layers in its sluggish passage

down the mountain. The water of the lake is of a grayish muddy colour, but tastes sweet and good, and has its chief source in the periodical floods which deluge the ground. I had unfortunately no lead and line with me to sound its greatest depth; but, from the muddy colour of the water, and from feeling the bottom with one of the paddles of the canoe, at little more than five feet beneath the surface, in several places within a short distance of its centre, I am persuaded that it is of no great depth at any part. The bottom was soft, and a dark slimy mud adhered to the paddle. We learnt from the native who had been so frightened at our first appearance that there were no fish in it. After I had been a short time on its surface, admiring the surrounding scenery, several canoes put off from among the bushes, in different parts of its circumference; and on reconnoitering my white jacket a little while, returned precipitately to their lair, being frightened at my gun, which, by the clumsily performed act of hiding it in the bottom of the canoe that they might approach, was unfortunately discovered to them. Enjoying for some time longer the cool, lambent, vivifying breeze on its smooth bosom, I returned on shore, and, presenting the native with a large clasp knife for the use of his canoe, with which he seemed highly gratified, joined my companion, and

made preparations for retracing our steps to the village, when another negro, who had just made his appearance, volunteered his services in directing us to a different path, which he gave us to understand was the nearest route. Entering this, and leaving the calm beauties of the mountain lake behind us with some regret, we trudged down hill, over much broken ground, in a winding beaten path, for upwards of two miles, and emerged from among the bushes and trees immediately behind the village. At almost every turning of this passage we found rude wooden crosses erected, and met with three or four small huts, intended for churches, formed of boards, thatched with grass, open at one end, and having nothing within them but a rustic wooden table, at the closed extremity, meant for an altar, on which were placed small crucifixes, and puppet images of saints,—St Antonio, St Barbara, &c.

Although the soil on the island is, in general, very sparing, consisting almost wholly of a thin stratum of decomposed lava and rock, and the decayed vegetable matters of former seasons, we found some large plantations on each side of our road, containing cassada, Indian corn, and many of the tropical fruits, in great abundance, hedged in, with considerable care, on each side of the pathway, with dense rows of the *jatropha curcas*, or physic nut. The villagers

did not surround us this time, as they had done on our first visit: the horror of fire-arms kept them at a distance. Before embarking in the boat, we discharged our pieces in the air, when all those near us set up a loud and discordant scream, and fell flat on their faces, as if they had been shot; and then jumped up, and ran as if the enemy of mankind had been close at their heels. Even among these ignorant savages, a "pretty considerable notion" seemed to be entertained of the generosity, as well as of the gullibility, of John Bull. They all endeavoured to impress upon our minds, in their few words of broken English, mixed with Portuguese, that they were very "*poor fellows*," and hinted that, as we were *very rich*, we could afford to give them a great deal; and several of them, who seemed to be chiefs, gave us to understand, that they wanted to go to England, and see King William, where Captain somebody, of a Yankee whaler, who had put the "*notion*" in their heads, told them that they would be made much of, and have every thing that they could desire. This transatlantic bastard of John Bull did not, of course, tell them that we had poisoned their majesties of Owhyhee, by an elaborate farrago of viands, *à-la-mode Anglaise*, instead of the simple, primitive, raw fish guts, and greasy pork, that their august stomachs had been accustomed to.

When we got on board in the evening, we found King Tom Standey, in his dressing-gown and green cap, at dinner with the Commodore, and affording every one the highest amusement, by his familiar ease and assurance, his unscrupulous demands for whatever was within his reach, and by several unkingly and disgusting solecisms in his manners,—such as indecorously blowing his nose in the tail of his coat, during dinner, and wiping it with his sleeve, from the shoulder to the wrist—eructating vociferously —cramming the whole extremity of a fowl into his mouth at a time, and, after crunching the bones between his teeth, ejecting them in his hand, and depositing them on the chair, between his legs! He seemed to be very fond of salt, swallowing, at intervals, whole spoonfuls of it out of the saltcellars. Some gin was put on the table, during dinner, thinking he might perhaps prefer it, for its potency, to wine. He was asked, which he would have?—and very coolly and modestly replied, by a few imperfect Anglo-Portuguese words, and by signs, not to be mistaken, that he, "poo fella, never mind," he would take some of the gin now, and that, as his belly was full, he would "bag" the wine and the remaining viands, and "make festa" on shore. This was beyond the utmost idea we had formed of his covetousness, liberal as it had been. But it was impossible to keep

our gravity, when, so far from thinking there was any chance of a refusal, he immediately followed this expression of his modest and courteous intentions, by letting the Commodore know, that, as he had no such sideboard furniture, he would also take with him the decanters and glasses! He was shewn, in the cabin, a large print of his present Majesty, which he admired very much, and addressed, as if it had been our good King in *propria persona*, introducing himself to the print, in the following words:—"Me King Tom Standey, King Anobona. You ver good King, my fader. Me, poo fella, never mind." And observing, with much surprise, his own sable countenance reflected in the glass, as if it were behind the print, he suddenly exclaimed, "Ah, King Tom! you there!—Me see you—me savey you ver well, King Tom Standey, King Anobona." At last he took his departure, pretty well "*stuffed*," as he called it; and, considering the quantity he had drank, but very slightly fuddled. But before taking leave of us, the Commodore, besides a musket, gunpowder, and many other articles, gave him a mirror, in which he continued to gaze at his own ebony visage, with unceasing and unsatisfied astonishment, all the way on shore. Like the rest of his subjects, he caught at every thing he could get; but had no notion, or took

care at least, not to shew any, of the value of the articles he had received, or a just sense of the attention he had met with. Some of us, observing this grasping, ungrateful, and unceremonious disposition, endeavoured to make him sensible of the value of what he had received, as he was going away, and told him that he ought to "*dash*" the Commodore with something, in return for so many favours. After some hesitation, he said he would send some fowls and pigs to our philanthropic chief, as a present. About an hour afterwards, a canoe came alongside, with a single fowl, and a message, saying, that the rest and the pigs had "run in bush," that is, made their escape into the woods, and were not to be found! This was, of course, a mere excuse; but we could not help laughing at its court-like ingenuity.

Anobona might possibly, in the event of a war with France, (which Heaven forefend!) be a desirable place to refit, and obtain refreshments for our vessels cruizing on the Equator, for the purpose of intercepting the homeward and outward bound trade; but could hardly serve any other end. Few vessels, going or returning from India, ever find it necessary to pass near this island. Unless under circumstances of necessity, it would be very inconvenient for them to do so. There is no water to be had at the village near which we anchored;

nevertheless, I was told that it might be obtained on the east side of the island, without difficulty: but that here the anchorage was unsafe. Were it in our possession, an aqueduct might be formed, at a very trifling expense, to convey water to the beach, from the lake on the top of the mountain; and refreshments of almost every other description might be reared on the island in great abundance. But, although it is styled the "Cornucopia" of the coast of Africa, by some old writers,* by whom it is also said to be more healthy than Prince's or St Thomas's Island, its produce could never be sufficiently great to render it of any importance in an agricultural point of view, from its trifling extent, and the scantiness of its soil; nor as a commercial station, for these reasons, as well as its great distance from the coast of Africa.

In concluding these imperfect remarks on Anobona, I shall take the liberty of quoting the account which is given of the island in an English translation of Bosman's (the Dutch factor at Elmina) description of the coast of Guinea, published in the year 1705, to shew how little change has taken place in the manners of the inhabitants since that period, and how little improvement may be expected any where under the auspices of the indolent and bigotted Por-

* Vide BOSMAN'S *Description of the Coast of Guinea.*

tuguese. He says, "This island is visited by a great number of ships, as well those which have been trading at Guinea, as those bound for East India and Angola. When the East Indiamen fall below the Gulf of Guinea, (for they, different from our account, reckon the Gulf of Guinea to take in almost the whole coast,) they put in here; and the ships bound for Angola touch here, it being almost in their way.

"Annaboa is so prodigiously stocked with cattle and fruit, that it far exceeds St Thomè and Prince's Island in both, though 'tis much smaller, and indeed not above half the circuit of either of them. Like St Thomè, it is almost always covered with a thick mist; but, if we may believe the Portuguese, not so unwholesome. But why it is more healthful I shall not presume to determine, for the air is almost the same, Annaboa being but about one degree and a half more south. The land is here full as high as at St Thomè, and in the highest place of it, according to the report of the Portuguese, is a lake of fresh and very good water, about which the air is as cold as the severest autumns in Holland. But who knows whether this be true?

"The Portuguese have tilled the plains to halfway up the hills; for so far the ground is good. But taking a view of this island from

below, it seems very dry and barren; notwithstanding which, it is all over planted with fruit trees,—viz. cocoes, oranges, limons, bakovens, bananas, palm trees, and several others, whose fruits are all plentiful and cheap. One hundred cocoa nuts are sold for a rixdollar; a thousand oranges or limons at the same rate; and the other fruits in proportion. Hogs, sheep, goats, chickens, &c. are to be bought for almost nothing, considering that we have them for all manner of old trash cloaths of linnen and woollen. In short, here is the true Amalthæa, or Cornucopia, of which the ancients have said so many fine things.

"The inhabitants of this island are black, and but a sort of half Christians, though they bear the name of Christians, for if they can but read a Pater Noster and Ave Maria, confess to the priest, and bring some offerings with them, they pass for good Christians.

"The white Portuguese of this island esteem them slaves, by reason that they are the descendants of those slaves which they set on this island. They are all of them, without any exception, thieves or rogues, that will injure or defraud no man more than they can. The women are all common public whores, which allure and mislead the sailors, and, except a very few, are monstrous ugly and illfavoured.

"The government of these people is trusted

in the hands of a white Portuguese, who is honoured with the illustrious name of Gouvernador. He who was honoured with this high post in my time was such a great Don, that if I had been charitable enough to have bestowed the alms of a crown upon him, he would have made no difficulty of receiving it, nor thought it an affront to his honourable charge, or the grandeur of his nation.

"His subjects also stood in such awe of him that, if I had but desired him, they would certainly have broken his head, and delivered the island into our possession. For this Don being appointed by a Portuguese gentleman, to whom this island belongs, as rent-gatherer in his name, to collect a third of all the inhabitants' cattel, fruit, and income, in order to secure somewhat for himself, he very fairly fleeces the inhabitants of a complete half, which renders him so hated by his black subjects that they would very willingly be released from their yoak, and deliver the island to another nation.

"But it would not indeed be serviceable to any nation, without all its black inhabitants were transported thence; for whilst they stay there, on account of the least difference with the possessors they would fly to the hilly part of the island, which is sufficiently inaccessible to the Europeans, and from thence so gall them that they would be obliged to abandon it; as it

happened to us when we formerly were in possession of it; for we left it on no other account.

"Besides the Gouvernador, I found here also two white priests, who were endowed with no other qualities than the profound ignorance and stupidity of the meanest of their neighbours, except only, (which is indeed something uncommon,) that they could drink as much brandy as I could wine, or other liquor. Their wisdom was lodged in their capuchin's cap. I cannot tell whether they could read or write, since I did not see one book they had, nor would they produce one, though I asked the favour, perhaps that it might not be defiled with my heretical fingers.

"They invited us to come and see their churches, which we did, and found them very handsome, and large enough for four times the number of inhabitants on the island. Before we entered the churches we were all over besprinkled with holy water, from which I conclude that it is not very dear here.

"They desired a bottle of wine of me to celebrate their mass with, which I gave them, and they thereupon promised me (though unasked) that they would say a mass for my happy voyage, after which I took leave of them."

He follows this amusing account with an

anecdote of what he appears to consider a very laudable trick played on a pirate at the island, by the master of an English merchant vessel.

"We saw here some small pieces of cannon, and asking where they got them, we were informed that they belonged to a small French pyrate, which stranded there about ten days before; the captain of which, with two of his men, was then upon the island.

"These pyrates had robbed the Gold Coast of some gold, slaves, and elephants' teeth. But two days before our arrival there, the Sloter Galley, an English ship, commanded by Thomas Kent, had set sail from hence, having made an agreement with the pyrates, in consideration of a part of their prey to be given to the captain, to carry them and all their booty to the French islands. The pyrates, depending on this contract, had brought all their goods on board. Captain Kent, and all the men, except the captain and two more, followed, who designed to have gone on board the last day of the Galley's stay here; but, as they were coming, were welcomed with a few musket-shots, and charged, if they valued their lives, to return back, which they were obliged to do; and had the satisfaction of seeing Captain Kent haul up his anchors, and set sail, with all their goods."

CHAPTER V.

Bidding adieu to Anobona, we set sail, late in the evening of the 30th, and steered towards the island of St Thomas, between which and the Isle de Rolle (an island little more than a mile in length, situated at the southern extremity of the former) we anchored, in the afternoon of the succeeding day. Although a single canoe, containing two miserable-looking blacks, who must have risked their lives for the purpose, came off to us from Rolle Island, bringing some tropical fruits, dried fish, and sponges, for sale, there was such a tremendous surf, throughout the whole line of coast of both islands, that none of our boats could land. Close to our anchorage, the sea was thundering and breaking violently among the clefts and chasms of the rocky shore, from which the spray issued in thick white jetting columns, like the smoke of artillery, curling in the air, and dissipating in thin vapour. Our anchorage was directly under the equator. The

wind was southerly, and the thermometer only seventy-nine degrees. There were three or four huts near us, on the principal island, and abundance of cocoa-nut trees in their vicinity; but we could perceive no inhabitants.

The outline of St Thomas's Island is very irregular and broken, and resembles, in its impenetrable forest-covered surface, the Island of Fernando Po; and, in its romantic appearance, its numerous fantastic-shaped hills, and inaccessible peaks, the Island of Princes, but on a far larger and more stupendous scale. We could, however, only look at it at a distance; and, finding our anchorage, as the swell increased, becoming hourly more unsafe, we left it next day, and reached, West Bay, Prince's Island, on the 2d of June, the day following. After we had been here two or three days, Senora Ferrara, hearing of our arrival, came round from her estate in Church Bay, and took up her abode in her unfinished residence here, bringing with her a whole host of male and female slaves. His Majesty's ship Atholl arriving soon after us, Madame's naval levees were, at this time, unusually crowded, and her hospitality taxed, far beyond all that could be endured in the cramped selfishness of a drizzly, callous, northern atmosphere; but the endeavours of the good "*Queen*," to please, and to afford us amusement, seemed only to increase with the number of her

visitors. Her slaves danced and sang to us, and performed in the evenings, under her own guidance and direction, some artless and imperfect operas, sacred and heroic, for our entertainment,—all of which she has taught them herself. Her house was at all times open to us; and her chief gratification seemed to consist in seeing it well filled, and in enjoying, with *due* feminine consistency, the universal deference paid to her. Banished as we are from the civilized world, the kindness of this good lady, and the inelegant games and rustic entertainments performed by her half savage attendants, afford us no small degree of gratification, by breaking in upon the monotony of our hazardous existence, and chasing away the dull thoughts of many an unoccupied and brooding hour. But the best of friends must part—the most celestial enjoyment and the deepest grief must equally have an end: and so, after a fortnight's stay, for the purpose of refreshment, and obtaining a supply of water and firewood, we bade adieu to Madame, and her cortege, on the 15th, and stood over towards the river Bonny, off the entrance to which we anchored on the 20th, about sixteen miles from the shore, in execution of our orders to suppress the slave trade,—a matter, from the many holes out of which vessels engaged in it may escape, owing to the bad faith and apathy of foreign Governments, and

the defects of our treaties with them, quite as agreeable, and almost as likely to be accomplished, as the punishment inflicted upon the fifty daughters of Danaus.

The land in the vicinity of this river, which, with the New Calebar, disgorges its contents, by a common outlet, into the sea, is so very low, that it is to be seen only from the mast head. Here we have, daily at present, incessant torrents of rain, and fine, clear moonlight nights. About dawn, the clouds gradually begin to form, and, with the advance of day, collect in dense masses, heavily charged with electricity, the salient flickering streams of which scintillate, with brilliant vivacity, in every direction around us, — while the thunder reverberates through the dense canopy over our heads with the most incessant and deafening clamour; and the product of this vehement natural conflict bursting the floodgates of heaven, rushes down upon us in a vast, continuous, and almost overwhelming torrent, until towards evening, when the clouds again gradually disperse, and, as the moon rises, disappear entirely, leaving a still, beautiful, and clear sky, save where, at intervals, a glimmer of lightning, issuing from some far distant cloud, illuminates the horizon over the broad continent of Africa. It is only in the vicinity of the land that these heavy rains occur. We have

found that their violence and frequency diminish as the distance off shore increases, and *vice versa;* and that, at one hundred and fifty miles, or even somewhat less, from the coast, there is only an occasional shower met with.

It was mentioned by the Landers, on their recent arrival at Fernando Po, after emerging from the interior of Africa, *via* the river Nun, and settling the long-disputed termination of the Niger, that they were of opinion the Nun communicated with the New Calebar river, and consequently with the Bonny, by means of a cross branch sufficiently large for canoe navigation. Hearing this statement repeated, I have taken some pains to make inquiries concerning so interesting a fact, and have ascertained—certainly not by personal observation, but upon what I conceive to be undeniable evidence—that all the streams which fall into the sea, from the Rio de Formosa to the Old Calebar inclusive, are united together by cross branches, and intermediate streams, at no great distance from the sea; consequently they may all, in a certain measure, be said to be mouths of the Niger. The sources from whence I have derived the information which led to this conclusion were the following: Masters of merchant ships, who have frequently visited the river, off the mouth of which we are at present anchored; naval officers who have

been there, and to some of the other rivers included, in the performance of their duty; and the most intelligent of the native Africans. From the former I learn, that canoes frequently arrive at the river Bonny from Duke Ephraim, a chief of the Old Calebar, by some inland stream, without ever seeing the ocean—that the arrival of canoes at the same place, and by a similar means, from the river Nun, and other rivers between the Bonny and Cape Formosa, is also of frequent occurrence—and the native blacks assure me, that there is a great inland trade in slaves, ivory, palm oil, and British manufactures, carried on through the medium of these streams uniting the principal rivers. Corroborative of these statements is the extreme flatness of the country between Cape Formosa and the Old Calebar river, and the numerous streams which may be seen to intersect it in all directions, even by ships standing close to the shore.

Before anchoring where we are at present, we spoke the Cherokee of Liverpool, (late brig of war of that name,) from the New Calebar river, laden with palm oil, the master of which informed us, that there were several French and Spanish vessels lying in that, and the river Bonny, in readiness to embark slaves; and that a Spanish schooner, with four hundred on board, had sailed three days before. He also acquainted

us with the total destruction, about a week ago, of the Dee of Liverpool, by fire, in one of these rivers, several of whose crew the Cherokee had then on board. During the four months that this vessel has been lying in the river Calebar, nine of her crew have died of fever. As our tender, the Black Joke, which was ordered to cruize off these rivers, was nowhere to be seen, we concluded that she had captured the above mentioned schooner, and had gone to Fernando Po for the purpose of landing her prisoners; but, after getting under weigh again, on the 23d, we fell in with her, and found that she had been under the necessity of proceeding to Prince's Island for water, and that consequently the Spaniard had unfortunately effected his escape, with his victims, during her absence. The commander of the tender gave us a melancholy account of the fate of those nine persons — part of the crew of her late capture, the Marinerito — who, I stated above, had left Anobona in three canoes, to endeavour to reach the Island of St Thomas. One of these canoes the tender picked up at sea, off the river Bonny, with three persons on board, in a dreadful state of wretchedness, having seen no land since they left Anobona, and left without food or water, except what of the latter they caught in their mouths when it rained, for ten days; the slender bark which contained the whole of their

little stock having swamped. Two of these men are still on board of the tender, with little hope of recovery—the other was landed at Prince's Island. They know nothing of their companions in the other two canoes, farther than that they conjecture they were destroyed by a heavy tornado, which came upon them when they had been long without food, their strength exhausted, and in despair of ever again setting their eyes on any wished for object, and from the effects of which they themselves most miraculously escaped. One would willingly discover a fearful retribution in this.

We left the Black Joke on her station, and stood towards Fernando Po, where we anchored on the 24th, and heard of the arrival of the Marinerito at Sierra Leone, after a passage of twenty-five days, during which twenty-five of the slaves died! From seventy to eighty of those landed in a weak state at Fernando Po, were, on being somewhat recruited, embarked on board of his Majesty's brig Plumper, and sent to Sierra Leone. The voyage in this vessel occupied the space of a month, and twenty more of the slaves fell victims to a horrible destiny before they reached the colony! Some of them, in their mental agony and bodily distress, jumped overboard and were drowned. What had they to live for? They were bereaved of home, and every blessing for ever.

Well might the wretched African, writhing under his accumulated miseries, and ready to sever the thread of an existence which had afforded to him such draughts of unmingled bitterness,---withered in heart, captive, homeless, friendless, and desolate—well might he deplore the fate of his unhappy country; and, thinking of all that he had loved and left there, exclaim, in the beautiful language of Moore—

> Oh! could'st thou but know
> With what a deep devotedness of wo
> I wept thy absence o'er and o'er again,
> Thinking of thee, still thee, till thought grew pain,
> And memory, like a drop that night and day
> Falls cold and ceaseless, wore my heart away!

Including the deaths among those who remained at Fernando Po, eighty-four of these unhappy beings have perished since the period of capture! There is something so truly distressing and deplorable in this, that it calls loudly for an immediate, a vigorous, and a permanent remedy. Such a remedy has been suggested in the foregoing pages. Government can alone obtain and apply it; and for the sake of suffering humanity, the greatest sacrifices ought to be made, and the strongest measures had recourse to, to induce those Catholic powers, whose interest alone is concerned, and who seem to be insensible to the calls of humanity, to grant the necessary concessions for the

purpose of abolishing this villainous trade. Some powerful efforts ought at once to be used, to lead them to a just sense of those flagitious cruelties perpetrated by their subjects, which so deeply stain their honour, and bring infamy upon the flag of the nation to which they belong. Either these things must be done, and done effectually, or the trade ought to be allowed to go on unobstructed: for, by the present inefficient laws enacted against it, we ourselves only add to the inhumanity with which it is carried on, by the measures which we adopt, as I have explained above, and as the present instance sufficiently demonstrates.

During our absence, the agent victualler has arrived here, in the Stentor transport, from Sierra Leone, bringing with him the whole of the naval stores, so that, in future, Fernando Po will be the naval depot on the coast, where ships of war may refit, and obtain supplies. This arrangement has been projected for some time, but whether it be judicious or not, remains to be proved. It is, however, already sufficiently established, that the damp nature of the atmosphere produces a rapid decay of almost every article sent here from England—canvass, spars, and ropes are found rotten—sugar in a state of deliquescence, resembling treacle—and bread so full of maggots and weevils that it is scarcely eatable, and would be

condemned as unfit for use, were it any where else than at Fernando Po, where there is no choice left, and little or nothing in lieu of it to be had. After a fortnight's stay, during which we had heavy showers daily, and the thermometer ranging from seventy-seven to eighty-one degrees, we took our departure for the Island of Ascension, touching again at Prince's Island, for wood and water, in our passage.

After some days lost in search of the mysterious Island of St Matthew,* which we did *not* discover, for the very best of reasons, that there is no such place in existence, we arrived, on the 29th July, at the Island of Ascension, a rugged, cinerulent congeries of volcanic tumuli, occupied by about four hundred individuals, consisting of a garrison of royal marines, and a few liberated Africans, with their wives and families, under the direction of Captain Bate, R. M. The climate here is exceedingly grateful to our feelings, after the damp and drizzly atmosphere

* Anobona has been most probably mistaken for an unknown island, and called St Matthew's by some one who was most mightily out in his longitude, (an occurrence formerly very common on this coast,) as they are both laid down on charts in the same latitude, and as the description given of the imaginary island answers that of the former, in having a lake on the top, from which ships used to derive a supply of water, when much in want of it, by "*parbuckling*" their casks down the side of the mountain.

of the pestilent coast we have just left. From the very small quantity of rain that falls on the lower parts of this island, but little decomposition of its superficies has taken place in this situation; consequently there is here scarcely any vegetation, and the air is uncommonly pure and dry. The temperature at present is varying from seventy-two to eighty degrees during the day. The upper half of what is called the green mountain, which is about seven miles from the anchorage, is decomposing rapidly. The elevation of this spot is two thousand eight hundred and eighteen feet. It is almost constantly enveloped in mist, but is, notwithstanding, uncommonly healthy—the thermometer averaging ten or twelve degrees below its usual range at the garrison and anchorage. The soil at this spot is a loose black earth, very productive, and already extensively cultivated. Fields of several acres of the common and sweet potato, turnips, and other esculent plants, adorn the sloping sides of the mountain; and the mountain house, besides its pleasure ground of English flowers and shrubs, has its kitchen garden, which produces almost every vegetable in great perfection and abundance. The transition from the arid, barren, treeless, low grounds, to this fertile spot, is so sudden and unexpected, that one is struck with no inconsiderable degree of surprise and pleasure on emerging from a scene

of the most awful desolation, and almost the next step entering one where there is every thing rural and agreeable. Until lately, the greatest want in the island has been a determinate supply of water. For this necessary article it placed its sole dependence upon the light and uncertain showers, and the scanty drips and percolation from certain parts of the rocks high up the mountain. Recently, however, a shaft has been sunk in a ravine on the southern aspect of the mountain, which, we are told, is to afford from two to three tons daily. Tanks have been built on the side of the mountain, and at the garrison, to contain this, and what may otherwise be collected; and the arduous duty of laying the six miles of iron pipes, which are to convey the water to the garrison tanks, will, it is supposed, be completed by Christmas. Near the garrison a range of building has been recently erected, which is intended for the accommodation of sick officers belonging to the African squadron, and the foundation of an hospital for the seamen has just been laid; and if it is intended to continue the squadron on the coast, which I conceive to be, under present circumstances, not only in a great measure useless, but very often injurious to the object for which it is sent there — to the cause of humanity — there is no place on the station better adapted for the sick and convalescents to

be brought to for recovery than this, although undoubtedly a higher part of the island would have been a far better situation for the hospital.

Wild goats and Guinea fowl are very numerous on the island, particularly the latter, but they are very shy, and shot with difficulty. The gannets, of which there are several varieties, congregate in vast numbers on particular points of the island, which have obtained, in consequence, the appellation of "Fairs." There they sit, looking stupidly at intruders, with the greatest *sang froid* imaginable, and are taken hold of with the greatest ease. But they sometimes take it into their heads to defend themselves, and in that case are apt to inflict a troublesome lacerated wound or two with the serrated edge of their long and powerful beaks. Not more than six or eight kinds of birds ever visit the island, consisting of the sea-swallow, gannet, petrel, frigate pelican, or man-of-war bird, tropic bird, and a few others of the palmipedeous tribe.

The *wide awakes*, as they are called by the seamen from their peculiar cry, or sea swallow, arrive in vast numbers about the month of September or October, and take up the same position or fair annually, where their eggs and young are taken in vast numbers by the people on the island, who consider them good food, particularly the former, many thousands of

which are brought in weekly during the breeding season. These birds take no trouble to build a nest, but lay their eggs upon the loose ashes and sand in vast numbers, and so close together that it puzzles one to conceive how it is possible that each can know its own. That these may be obtained fresh, the people belonging to the island sometimes adopt the following method:—They clear a spot of the broken egg shells, filth, and rubbish, which covers the surface of the ground in the fair where they congregate, and, after having done so, set themselves down at a little distance to watch the event. The cleared portion of the fair is very soon covered with birds, which deposit their eggs almost immediately, and are succeeded by others which do the same, so that ten or twelve dozen eggs, assuredly fresh, are often taken from the spot that has been cleared, in the course of a few hours. These are about the size of a pullet's egg, and are covered with large dark brown spots.

Land crabs and rats are very numerous, and destructive to the young vegetation about the mountain, and indeed to every thing edible. Black crickets are in myriads in every part of the island, and form the chief food of the Guinea fowl. Wild cats are pretty numerous, and are hunted and destroyed with dogs kept on the island for that purpose. The cattle, of

which there are a considerable number, are brought from the Cape of Good Hope; and of the vegetable productions there is a greater variety than might be conceived, but very few of them are indigenous. In the low grounds, a few thistles, euphorbium, and purslain, are all that indicate the existence of vegetation. Proceeding higher up, we have some signs of grass, and we have also the beautiful yellowish-red flower of the ipecacuanha, the wild St Helena, or Cape gooseberry, and a few stunted plants of the common ricinus; and still higher up, besides several tropical fruits, shrubs, and flowers, there are many of the horticultural plants, and some of the fruits, of England. Fish is in great abundance and variety around the island.

The present is not the turtle season, but those of last year are kept by the garrison in two large ponds, from whence they are removed with ease when wanted. December and January are the principal months during which the females come on shore to deposit their eggs on the sandy beach. They are watched for during the night, when they land for this purpose, and are seized in their retreat, and turned on their backs, where they lie helpless until it is found convenient to remove them to one of the ponds. As this is the only method of taking these unwieldy animals, it seldom happens that a male turtle is captured. The fortifications are not

yet completed, nor are they likely to be so, as the few marines on the island have more work in contemplation for them than they will be able to accomplish for a very long period, and for the performance of which, by the by, they have nothing more than their poor pay as marines. Mechanics who have enlisted into the marine corps are chosen from the different divisions in England and sent out here, where they are kept at such laborious work from morning to night as our working classes in England have no idea of, and for which they receive nothing in addition to their mere daily pay, which amounts to somewhere about tenpence; and at this reasonable rate Government has its public buildings erected, and all its other public work done, and done exceedingly well, at the Island of Ascension.

The climate here is remarkably healthy, and, indeed, the stout, hale, ruddy appearance of the inhabitants, sufficiently demonstrate that it is so, without going any farther for proofs. Dysentery may be said to be the most prevalent disease; but even this cannot properly be said to be prevalent, but only as compared with others, as it occurs but seldom, and very rarely proves fatal. The south-east trade wind, no doubt, contributes to the salubrity of the island, by the brisk and unintermitting breeze which is thus wafted over its surface, and which is so

charged with saline matters from the ocean, over which it sweeps, that it often leaves an incrustation of salt on the lava-coloured surface in its passage.

As a depot for stores, owing to its extreme dryness, Ascension is incomparable. We have seen, that at Fernando Po the bread is in a short time riddled with weevils, and full of maggots, and that every thing else rots, from the humidity of the atmosphere, while every article of stores is as sound, after it has been here some years, as when first brought out. For this reason, and as the length of passage from any of those places on the coast, where our ships are in the habit of cruizing for slave vessels, seldom exceeds ten days, there can be no comparison between this place and Fernando Po, as a depot for stores, where the African squadron may refit, particularly as the anchorage is excellent, and the wind always blows off shore. As a Government garden the island is highly useful, and its salubrity points it out as a desirable place for the African squadron to refresh and take in a new stock of health, and to send their sick for recovery. For these purposes, and for the supplies which it occasionally affords to distressed merchant vessels—many of which, bound to and from India, now touch here, to complete their stock of water and purchase a few turtle, in preference to St

Helena—it is highly valuable, and may be still more so in the event of war; but its arable surface is so trifling, and its distance from any continent is so great, as to preclude the idea of its ever being more extensively important, excepting that, while our flag flies over it, it is no thorn in our side, as it might be in the possession of another.

The supply of water is still so small and uncertain, even with the recent addition by the shaft mentioned above, that, were there a succession of demands of any magnitude for this necessary article, the island could not afford it without endangering the quantity required for the support of its own inhabitants. From what I can learn, however, it is quite probable that this may be in a great measure remedied, by sinking a few more shafts, to a great depth, at a little distance from the sea shore. This has been attempted, but hitherto, I believe, very imperfectly.

29th August. The Conflict gun-brig arrived here to-day, from Freetown, Sierra Leone, with her officers and crew in a very sickly state. She had been lying at the colony for some months, and latterly that scourge of the coast, the yellow remittent fever, had made its appearance on board in an epidemical form, attacking thirty-three of her small crew, eight of whom had already paid the debt of Nature.

1st September. The progress of the fever, on

board of the Conflict, was stopped on approaching the Equator; and since her arrival here, it is astonishing with what rapidity those still labouring under the disease have recovered, affording a strong confirmation of what has been stated regarding the eligibility of this spot for the reception and restoration of the sick and convalescents belonging to the squadron.

We sailed again on the 9th September, and reached Prince's Island on the 21st. I cannot leave Ascension without expressing how much we have all been gratified, and improved in health by our visit. Nothing could possibly exceed the attention we have met with from every one; and it is not to be wondered at, if, in the midst of so much kindness, we occasionally forgot the abhorred coast, and the vapid and enervating climate of Fernando Po, to which we knew we must return. A few days after we reached Prince's Island, his Majesty's ship Favourite arrived from Loando, where she had been despatched to look after some slave vessels, of which information had been received, and the intelligence she brings is of a very mortifying description, and proves, in the most incontestible manner, the absolute folly of attempting to suppress the traffic under the existing treaties and laws relative to it. She found lying at Loando ten or twelve vessels of different descriptions, ready to take slaves on board, the greater part of

whom were Portuguese; and, consequently, being to the southward of the Equator, the commander of the Favourite, (such is the proviso in our treaty with Portugal,) dared not interfere with them, and even had each of them been laden with their wretched victims, he must have been compelled to suffer them to proceed in their *humane* employment unmolested! Since the convention with Brazil came into operation, which made the slave trade piracy, there is not a single flag of that nation to be found on the coast: but, what is the result? The Brazil trade is now carried on with the most perfect impunity under the flag of Portugal; and all that this convention has effected, concerning which there was so much exultation among unthinking philanthropists, is a change in the colour of a piece of bunting, or a shift from a worthless flag to one, if possible, still more degraded.

On the 3d of October, we again anchored at Fernando Po, where we found that, during our absence, an officer of the Royal Marines had arrived from England to superintend the affairs of the settlement, and had brought with him a number of marines and mechanics, for the service of the infant colony. The fatality of this wretched place has been strikingly exemplified in numerous instances since we left it. Six of those unfortunate mechanics and marines

just arrived are already dead, and a great part of the remainder have been in the hospital. A naval lieutenant, Mr Sullivan, who came out to join his Majesty's brig Plumper, by the same conveyance with these men, is also already dead. The agent victualler and one of his clerks have been at the brink of the grave, and have gone home to preserve their lives. The Favourite sloop of war, which we left here, had nine persons seized with fever; the Fair Rosamond, tender to this ship, out of her small complement of forty men, ten cases of fever, and two deaths; and the master of the Stentor transport, and one of the boys of the same vessel, died of fever soon after we left the island, while nearly all the crew were attacked with the same disease. In fact, there is among our ships of war, and among all visitors to this place, but one opinion respecting the climate of Clarence Town, Fernando Po; and none but those whose interest is concerned, and who hold lucrative situations in the settlement—and who would, of course, lose them were the place given up in consequence of the truth being made known, and the fatality of its climate painted in its true colours—venture to utter a syllable in favour of it. But by these persons, the cause of disease and death is attributed to any thing rather than what it truly and evidently is,—the pestilential nature of the atmosphere.

It is really difficult either to speak or write with patience of statements so inconsistent with facts, while at every step we meet with some unhappy labourer, whose sallow, wretched, death-like aspect, and fleshless limbs, evince too truly how little faith can be placed in bare assertions, and indicate too strongly that fever hath "marked *the climate* for its own." These very persons tell us, at the same time, that "it is a *healthy thing* to have the ague"—"that one is always safe when he has an ague:" meaning by this to say that they are less susceptible of the fatal remittent fever while under the influence of this minor pest. Let any one conceive to himself what sort of an existence that must be, when a man is safe only while he is labouring under an ague! a disease that disorders his nervous system, and, if it continues long, produces visceral disease, and ruins his constitution for ever. This is an admission of those very individuals who praise the settlement for its salubrity, as compared with other parts of the coast of Africa; and from this I leave every one to form his own opinion of the nature of the climate, and of the very logical deductions of these honest and disinterested gentlemen, whose statements might make an impression favourable to the settlement, where facts should be known simply as they stand. What I have already related, sufficiently demonstrate

that Clarence Settlement is most unhealthy. The only question is, Whether it be more so than any other of our settlements on the western coast of Africa? It is, to say the least of it equally as fatal as Sierra Leone, and that is saying a great deal, by the proofs, and for the reasons, which have just been given, as well as those mentioned in a former page; and, in my opinion, it is much more so: for, as we have found on an average that two or three of the forty or fifty whites in the settlement die weekly, and that the whole of the remainder, with few exceptions, either are, or have been ill—how frightful would such a general sickness, and average mortality, be considered among three or four thousand! Be it remembered, too, that this mortality was in the common course of things, and not caused by an epidemic. I question whether Sierra Leone, bad as it is, including epidemics, has ever been nearly so fatal. But besides these proofs in favour of the climate of Sierra Leone, as contrasted with that of Fernando Po, another assertion of the good people here speaks more decisively to the point at issue, and against themselves, than all other proofs that can be adduced. They tell us that a debauch at Fernando Po is sure to terminate in fever, and in all probability death—that it is impossible to tamper with the constitution there, without running the greatest risk; and

instance all the deaths among the working classes, which they say—and say very unjustly—arise entirely from drunkenness, and that they are, therefore, from sad experience, guarded in their mode of life. No doubt, drunkenness strongly predisposes to fever and other diseases; but are the colonists at Sierra Leone cautious how they indulge in the pleasures of the table? Do they dread the consequence of frequent debauches? Or do they tell us that drunkenness is at all times, or even commonly, the cause of death among the labouring residents, or others, in the colony? No! but instead of this, it is notorious, that they indulge to the greatest excess—that they have no solicitous anxieties about the result of their irregularities—and that it is by no means common or necessary that even repeated intoxication is followed with fatal consequences, as is the case at Fernando Po, according to the statements of the residents there. If, therefore, at one place drunkenness is sure to produce disease, and at the other no such termination is ever looked for, although it must, as it does every where else, occasionally occur, what is the conclusion? why, that the new settlement at Fernando Po has a climate more destructive to human life, and less tolerant of the liberties usually taken with health by civilized people, than that of Sierra Leone. Every one must know that labouring men, from

the very nature of their work, are much more susceptible of disease, particularly in these burning latitudes, than those who have no fatiguing duties to perform, and who have both the means and the opportunity of taking care of themselves, and the "appliances" for preserving their health. This has been very remarkably the case at Fernando Po; for while the former have been dying daily, the latter have only suffered from ague, and very few of them have lost their lives, although many have lost their health, and have been obliged to return to England in a state of mental, as well as bodily, imbecility. It is, no doubt, in a great measure owing to this comparative immunity that the ill-advised, self-interested supporters of its salubrity are induced to assert, so unfeelingly and unjustly, that the cause of so many deaths among these poor people is drunkenness; not taking into consideration their own frequent attacks of ague, and the far greater liability of working persons to disease. At present, the hospital is full of whites; but concealment and misrepresentation being the order of the day here, from what motive it is difficult to conceive, there is no means, I regret to say, of getting at the actual mortality. But, in spite of every attempt to cloak the melancholy occurrences which take place, they are too frequent, too appalling, and too well known,

to be concealed. Despair has seized the mechanics recently arrived. Some of them have written to the Commodore, giving an account of the many deaths among their companions, and the sickness and distress among the remainder, and begging to be sent home; as, according to their original agreement, they were to be permitted to go home, should the climate prove injurious to their health. Besides the mortality among the whites, the number of deaths among the liberated Africans and Kroumen, connected with the settlement, is also very great: and no note is taken of the destruction to life on board merchant vessels touching here, and of the great number of the crews sent to the hospital, never to return. There is such a horror of this hospital, as it is called, among all the poor people in the settlement, whites as well as blacks, that they give themselves up for lost when it is found necessary to send them there, so few come out of it alive.

Unfortunately for our African colonies, individuals have occasionally got a footing in them, who have been scouted from society, and who, like drowning men, grasp at whatever is within their reach, to save them from perdition. But Africa has gained nothing, by having thus become the forlorn hope of the disgraced. If this settlement is ever to improve, these are not the characters to

bring, or to suffer to remain here, far less to place in official situations. It is insulting the feelings of the respectable men in it, as well as of every naval officer employed on the station, who may often be obliged, from necessity, to come in contact with charaters of this description, in the performance of their duty; and who, with that proper sense of respect for himself which every man ought to possess, and that abhorrence of dishonesty which every upright mind feels, would avoid any such communication, as injurious to his honour, and as compromising whatever is estimable in his character as a man.

Our tender, the Black Joke, Lieutenant William Ramsay, was lying here, waiting to acquaint us with some captures which she and the Fair Rosamond, Lieutenant H. V. Huntly, had made, since we last saw them. The latter, while cruizing in the Bight of Benin, fell in with and captured, on the 20th of July, the Spanish schooner, Potosi, of ninety-eight tons, twenty-six men, and one hundred and ninety-one slaves on board, bound from Lagos to Havanna; and, on the 10th September, the two tenders, in company, chased into the river Bonny, and captured, the Spanish brigs, Rapido and Regulo, — the former of one hundred and seventy-five tons, eight large guns, fifty-six men, and two hundred and four slaves; the latter, one hundred and forty-seven tons,

(both Spanish admeasurement,) five large guns, fifty men, and two slaves: both bound to Cuba. Connected with the capture of these vessels, a circumstance of the most horrid and revolting nature occurred, the relation of which will afford an additional instance of the cruelty and apathy of those who carry on the slave trade, — of the imperfection of the laws enacted for its suppression, as well as of the additional inhumanity entailed upon it by ourselves, as a consequence of the very imperfection of these laws. Both vessels were discovered at the entrance of the Bonny, having just sailed from thence; and, when chased by the tenders, put back, made all sail up the river, and ran on shore. During the chase, they were seen from our vessels to throw their slaves overboard, by twos, shackled together by the ancles, and left in this manner to sink or swim, as they best could! Men, women, and young children, were seen, in great numbers, struggling in the water, by every one on board of the two tenders; and, dreadful to relate, upwards of a hundred and fifty of these wretched creatures perished in this way, without there being a hand to help them, — for they had all disappeared before the tenders reached the spot, excepting two, who were fortunately saved by our boats from the element with which they were struggling. Several managed, with difficulty, as may be supposed, to swim on shore,

and many were thrown into large canoes, and in that manner landed, and escaped death; but the multitude of dead bodies cast upon the beach, during the succeeding fortnight, painfully demonstrated, that the account given to us, by the natives on the banks of the Bonny, of the extent of the massacre, had been far from exaggerated. The individuals whose lives had been saved by the boats were two fine intelligent young men, riveted together by the ancles, in the manner described. Both of them when recovered pointed to the Rapido, as the vessel from which they were thrown into the water. On boarding this vessel, no slave was found; but her remorseless crew having been seen from both tenders busily engaged in their work of destruction, and as the two poor blacks, who endeavoured to express gratitude for their rescue by every means in their power, asserted, with horror and alarm depicted in every feature, that this was the vessel from which they were thrown, she was taken possession of. On board the Regulo only two hundred and four slaves were found remaining, of about four hundred and fifty. All of those found on board of her were branded with the letter T on the right shoulder. Had the commander of the Black Joke, (which had been cruizing off the river Bonny for a long period,) who knew that those vessels were lying there, ready to take slaves on

board, been permitted to use every means in his power to suppress the slave trade, he could and would have gone up the river with his vessel, and destroyed them with the greatest ease; and thereby prevented the merciless cruelty which subsequently took place. But no! He dared not; because he was liable in heavy penalties, had he even *detained* a Spaniard, without having slaves *actually on board.* These inhuman scoundrels are fully aware of this; and it was this very legal impediment to the capture of Spanish vessels which induced them to throw their miserable captives into the river; so that, no slave being found when boarded by the tenders, they and their vessels might be suffered to escape. But they could not effect their nefarious design completely, for our tenders were close at their heels, and they were detected in their crime, and consequently detained. As, however, there were no slaves *actually found on board* of the Rapido, and as the members of the Court of Mixed Commission at Sierra Leone usually adhere to the *letter*, instead of the *spirit*, of the law, and the treaties having for their object the suppression of the slave trade—although the fact of her having slaves, *bona fide*, on board, and having thrown them out in the murderous manner described, was witnessed by some hundreds of persons—it is questioned by many

here, on a consideration of the circumstances attending the trial of cases somewhat similar, whether this court, from whose verdict there is no appeal, will condemn her or not.* It is quite certain, whether this may be the case or not, that there will be no punishment inflicted upon the perpetrators of so great a crime.

Thus, as I have already said, the half measures we are obliged to adopt for the suppression of this merciless traffic, adds incalculably to its inhumanity. Here we see, that in a futile attempt to save their vessels from capture, these remorseless speculators in blood sacrificed more than a hundred and fifty lives. Had we let them alone, the dreadful event would not have taken place. One of two things only could have prevented it, namely, the destruction or capture of their vessels before the slaves were taken on board, (which is undoubtedly the most effectual plan,) or allowing them to depart unmolested, after they were embarked; for humanity is so little known among the crews of their vessels, that even at sea, where there was not the most distant chance of escape to land by swimming, as in the present instance, they have been known, when chased by ships of war, to sacrifice their captives in a similar manner. It is in vain to look for any of the better feelings

* She was condemned on the evidence of the two slaves.

among these unprincipled men, who are the very dregs and offscourings of society,—pirates, outlaws, and wretches who have been guilty of the most heinous offences, and are therefore perfect adepts in every species of villainy, and would shrink from no crime, of whatever magnitude, where their interest was concerned. Both vessels being aground when taken possession of, it became a duty of the most laborious nature to get them afloat, and the zeal of Lieutenants Huntly and Ramsay, together with that of the officers and the crews of both tenders for this purpose, were at length successful, after several days of the most arduous exertion.

9th November. Since our arrival at the settlement, we have been employed repairing the Black Joke, for which purpose she has been hauled up on a rude kind of slip, or dock, where our carpenters, and several of those belonging to the island, have been daily at work upon her. Two days ago one of these island carpenters died of fever, and all the others have been more or less ill. Of the eight persons employed about this vessel, belonging to our ship, five have been seized with fever, and all the others are complaining, and what is more, they are all very sober characters. In consequence of sickness making its appearance also on board of the ship, in the shape of fever, cholera, and nume-

rous obstinate, indolent, and irritable ulcers, arising from the slightest scratch, we took our departure this evening from the destructive climate of Clarence establishment leaving the Atholl, which arrived here yesterday, to look after the repairs of the tender until our return. We stood towards West Bay, Prince's Island, where we anchored on the 15th, got refreshments for the crew, fruit and vegetables—articles not to be had at Fernando Po—took on board a supply of good water, and sailed again, on the 17th, for the settlement, where we anchored two days afterwards, having nearly got rid of all the cases of disease previously contracted there.

During the ten days that we have been absent from this place, two mechanics and two marines have fallen victims to fever; and of the remainder in the hospital, there are three with little hopes of recovery. These make the number of deaths, during the last three months, exceed a fourth part of the whole white population, which has never at any time exceeded sixty! and this fact alone damns all the proofs that ever were invented of the eminent salubrity of the festering atmosphere of this new English charnelhouse, so admirably adapted for getting rid of our surplus population. Why send convicts to the finest climate in the world, or pamper them at home in hulks, at such an enormous expense, when they might

be sent here for a mere trifle, and so easily disposed of? As our friend, the pink of Glasgow bailies, might be supposed to say, "they would just gae out o' the warld like the sough o' an auld sang, and gie nane o' us ony mair trouble." A commutation of the punishment of death to transportation to Fernando Po, is worthy of some consideration, if it be intended to continue the establishment. The penalty, God knows, would be severe enough, and the ends of justice would be just as well served; and there is no want of work for some thousands of convicts to perform for the next twenty years, even if it were only to clear the ground. But first we must purchase the ground, for I understand that the Spanish government has only lent us the temporary occupation of two or three miles of it, as we will not purchase the whole island: and to continue even its present expense to the country, which amounts to at least £40,000 per annum, upon such an uncertain tenure, is the most egregious folly imaginable. Either have the whole island, or give it up entirely; for as sure as we enlarge and improve the settlement, (and we must do both before it can be of any use—before its ostensible object can be accomplished, namely, the location of the liberated Africans,) so surely will the Spanish government increase its price, and in the end make their own terms: so that, for what will now cost us only £150,000 or £200,000, a million may be

demanded ten years hence. This is an instance of that injudicious economy, so curiously combined with the equally injudicious profusion, for which our Government has, of late years, been so eminently distinguished. Forty thousand pounds a-year are thus expended upon Fernando Po, while dock-yard curtailments are daily going on, and the energies of the navy, upon which our country mainly rests her hopes of peace and safety, are cramped and paralyzed, in consequence of the insurmountable obstacles thrown in the way of that necessary stimulus, promotion, for the purpose of saving a few hundreds—both with the best of motives, no doubt, namely, relief from our own public burdens at home, as well as the alleviation of the miseries of the distressed African.

It has been unfortunate for the improvement of Africa, as well as for the advancement of the interests of our settlements there, that the persons appointed to official situations have very generally made mere jobs of them; and as soon as they have served their end, of pocketing a considerable sum of money, or in some other way furthering their own private views, provided the climate spares their lives, they have scampered off, and left the settlement to the superintendence of other individuals, equally as ignorant and careless of its interests, and equally as solicitous of their own, as their predecessors.

And this is one grand reason why I conceive that the natives, or permanent residents, such as the Maroons at Sierra Leone, should be appointed, as soon as it can be done, to fill official situations, in preference to the factitious and ephemeral whites.

The very elements seem to conspire against the formation of a settlement, in a situation so destructive to human life as Fernando Po, two transports, or freight ships, laden with stores and provisions for the establishment at Clarence Cove, having been totally lost on their passage out to it, during the last twelve months.

27th. The whites on shore continue to die daily. There are sixteen of those now remaining in the colony at present in the hospital, seven of whom are marines. Only one death has occurred to-day, and I think three of the remaining unfortunate men may, perhaps, survive for twelve hours longer; but all are in a precarious state.

8th December. We sailed to-day for Prince's and the Island of Ascension, glad to escape from the pestilent and destructive atmosphere of Clarence Town, as it is called, with the loss of only one man. We have escaped miraculously; which is only to be attributed to the great distance we were anchored off shore, perhaps out of reach of the poisonous exhalations or miasmata—to the precautions taken to keep the ship clean, dry, and well ventilated —

to hindering the seamen from going on shore, and thus preventing the occurrence of intoxication, and other irregularities — favourite sins of seamen — which are too often the forerunners, and always the predisposing causes, of fever, and other diseases, in these latitudes. But we have not escaped entirely scot free: several pretty severe remittent and intermittent fevers have occurred on board. Eight or nine cases of cholera — not the scourge that is at present wasting continental Europe, Cholera Morbus, but a disease of a milder nature — and a great many catarrhs and sore throats have also appeared, originating in some atmospherical peculiarities imperceptible to the senses.

11th December. We anchored in North West, or George's, Bay, Fernando Po, this forenoon, for the purpose of getting a supply of yams from the natives, as our stock of bread is almost exhausted, and what remains is so full of insects, and so injured in other respects by the climate, that it is scarcely eatable. In consequence of the loss of the Norval, freight ship, about two months ago, laden with provisions and stores for the settlement, there was no bread to be had when we left it, and very little provisions of any sort. They were depending solely upon the supply of yams and live stock received from the mainland by boats.

The character of the island around this bay, were it not for the exuberant vegetation, would

be very similar to that of Ascension. It is only the frequent rains, and the difference of climate, which, by decomposing the ashes and lava originally on the surface of Fernando Po, and thereby affording shelter and nourishment for multitudes and vast varieties of the vegetable world, have made the aspect of their superficies so unlike each other. As at the Island of Ascension, every little hill in this vicinity is an extinguished volcanic tumulus, and these are pretty numerous. I can count six or eight, besides the two principal mountains, on the north and south divisions of the island. The scenery here is uncommonly pleasing and has been said by some ardent admirers of African scenery, and proselytes to the doctrine of its never failing salubrity, to resemble the Bay of Naples; but with less reason, I think, than any odious comparison I have ever heard made. There does not appear to be the slightest resemblance, except in the volcanic mountains, of which, instead of one, it has nearly a dozen, and all of them extinguished. It makes one smile to see the magnificent Bay of Naples dragged forth on all occasions in comparison with objects so little worthy of it. We have Dublin Bay, which is said to resemble that of Naples, whereas it does so just about as much as the native *fruit* of the Green Isle resembles a racy pine apple; and the Firth of Forth, too, is unhappily and arrogantly put in

competition with the varied magnificence of the Neapolitan Sinus; while every one who has seen both knows that the similitude is not more striking than that between a *barley bap* and a rich and highly ornamented twelfth cake.

George's Bay is of very considerable extent, and richly wooded, and much of the higher portions of ground exhibit every stage of cultivation; yet there is not a human habitation to be seen, although a pretty numerous population is visible in the volumes of smoke that issue from among the trees and bushes in every direction. Indeed, this is said to be the most populous part of the island. The north-east side of the bay is rather low, and a few trifling rivulets issue from this place, which, however, at a very short distance from the beach becomes diversified with hills. The head of the bay is high, and studded, as I have already said, with volcanic cones. The principal mountain on the south part of the island is rather steep, and its ascent is very rapid from the south-west side of this bay, which seems, in many respects, the most eligible situation for a settlement. Completely open to the sea breeze, which never blows sufficiently strong to endanger ships at anchor — an excellent anchorage, good water, a mountain close at hand many thousand feet high, the principal part of it cleared of wood, and for several miles cultivated, (the yam

plantations shewing like the enclosures of a farm in England, with here and there a tree garnishing the green rectangular fields, separated by others recently turned up by the plough, or some implement that serves the same purpose,) where country-houses, or an hospital, might, with ease, be placed in any temperature short of freezing; plenty of disposable ground for the location of the liberated Africans; besides the additional convenience to the mercantile shipping from the rivers Calebar, Bonny, Nun, and others in the Delta of Benin, which could touch here in their passage home, instead of running to leeward, as they are obliged to do, to the present settlement, for supplies before going to England, and by which means they are very often delayed a whole fortnight. They had been in the habit of touching here for supplies, such as water, wood, and yams, until lately that an intimation has been given to the masters of these vessels, by the present superintendent, that they will in future forfeit £100 if they do not call at the settlement for what they require. I imagine this must be done "by authority," of course; but there was no little grumbling among the masters in consequence of it.

One of the most important considerations in the formation of a new settlement in these latitudes is the salubrity of the situation; for

of what use is it to erect establishments, to build houses, and to people a spot where the besom of destruction sweeps it clean of all the European inhabitants, almost as fast as they come within range of the baneful influence of its atmosphere? If there be one situation on the island more unhealthy than another, it is that spot upon which the present settlement is placed. Low, and surrounded with stagnant pools, and sluggish muddy rivulets, and swampy fields of mangrove, every observant person must suspect its insalubrity at the first glance; and the events of the last four months have sufficiently proved that such a suspicion is correct. How is it that the natives have so few cultivated spots of ground on the lower parts of the island, and that the chief signs of the ax and the plough are on mountain ridges, more than half a mile above the level of the sea? Such is the fact: and the only way to account for it is, that the natives have, by experience, discovered the insalubrity of the lower parts of the island. The present is what is commonly called the healthy season, and we left the people at Clarence Cove, to use a vulgar, but, in this instance, very applicable expression, "dying like rotten sheep." What must the mortality be during the *unhealthy* season, or during an epidemic, particularly if the white inhabitants were numerous, and not, as now, amounting to a mere handful?

The only objections which, I imagine, could have been urged against placing the settlement on the south-west part of this bay — which I conceive to be the most eligible, as it has the usual characteristics of a healthy situation, although it must, in this respect, but differ in degree from the present settlement — are the following: —

1st. The great number of aborigines in the vicinity.

2d. The increased distance of the spot from the rivers on the continent, where the slave trade is carried on.

3d. The surf on the beach from the sea breeze, and the openness of the anchorage.

To these the following answers may be given:

1st. The natives may be conciliated, as they have already been, with the greatest ease, and ground enough obtained for the location of liberated Africans, without infringing on what they occupy.

2d. Slave vessels issuing from or entering these rivers, are seldom or never seen from the present settlement, and the only intelligence received concerning them is derived from the colonial schooners, and merchant vessels arriving there. The increase of distance, which is barely thirty miles, is therefore a matter of very trifling consideration, as these vessels would still bring accounts of those engaged in the slave trade.

3d. The anchorage is what seamen call "excellent holding ground." The wind never blows a gale directly into the bay, which is completely sheltered from tornadoes, the only dangerous winds on this part of the coast. The surf on the beach, from the moderate sea breeze, is generally trifling, and can never be so very great, but that a small pier, run a few yards out into the sea, would completely annul the objection, were it ten times as great.

Great numbers of the natives came to the beach to sell their yams, but, as they would take nothing in exchange excepting axes, of which there was but a small number on board, we were only able to obtain a supply for three days, in consequence of which we must be put upon half the usual allowance of bread, bad as it is, or half the usual allowance of yams, which at best form but a poor substitute for the "staff of life." Here, some five or six years ago, the most valuable article of barter was old iron hoops, cut into pieces six or eight inches long. These constituted the current coin of the country, and were eagerly received in exchange for their produce,—yams and live stock: but commerce and "*the march*" go hand in hand, and now "*the Boo-bee*" is seen with a neat Birmingham blade and "bone-ivory" handle stuck between his left arm and its twisted belt of straw, and he treats a bit of the once valued iron

hoop with as much sovereign contempt as the impudent menial of a second-rate hotel turns over, and turns up his nose at, the few pence thrown to him, because they do not quite amount to half as much as the full value of the "half-pay" glass of brandy and water which it has just been his arduous office to place before you. This improved change of ideas has, no doubt, originated with the liberality of the Liverpool palm oil traders, who have hitherto been in the habit of touching here. The natives on this part of the island appear to be, in general, stronger and more lively than those I have seen near the settlement, which may arise, perhaps, from the air of the mountainous region in which they live. There is no difference in their costume: each carried a long barbed or crenated wooden spear, but, excepting a knife, none of them possessed any other weapon.

We reached Ascension on the 5th January, 1832, and after taking on board a supply of provisions in excellent preservation — more desirable after the rottenness which the climate of Fernando Po had introduced among those we had been recently using as food, and of which, bad as it was, we had a reduced allowance — we proceeded towards Sierra Leone, where we anchored on the 28th, and found there his Majesty's ship Isis, bearing the flag of Rear-Admiral Warren, who had arrived to

take command of this and the Cape of Good Hope station, and who had consequently brought orders for us to proceed to England,—a piece of intelligence, as may be supposed, not a little gratifying to us. By the Isis, we learn that the French government have entered into a convention with ours, for the purpose of granting the mutual right of search within certain limits of this coast, for the more effectual suppression of the slave trade. As this treaty does not contemplate the capture of vessels fitted for the reception of slaves, and as all slave vessels detained under the French flag are, by this arrangement, to be sent to Goree for adjudication, such a treaty—in so far as the prevention or suppression of the slave trade is concerned—must be a complete nullity. It will, perhaps, obstruct it for a short time, until another convenient flag can be found, under which to carry it on; or, if this be not the sole effect of the treaty, it will most certainly add to the cruelty with which the captive slave is at present treated on board French slave vessels—their hitherto comparative immunity from seizure inducing them to take on board a smaller number than those vessels more liable to capture, and consequently enabling them to attend better to cleanliness, as well as to provide more and better food and drink for their wretched inmates. The great distance of Goree from every part of the

coast where the slave trade is carried on will likewise add greatly to the misery of the slave, by the length of passage after capture. Until the slave trade is ultimately denounced as piracy under the law of nations, by the consent of the civilized world, its suppression must be but partial and incomplete. Were France and England cordially to unite their exertions for this purpose, the desirable object is more than half accomplished.

1st February. The colony of Sierra Leone has been unusually healthy since we left it, and appears to have undergone some improvements, particularly in the direction of the Cape, where the country is more extensively cleared of the wood and jungle which covered it. Indeed this appears to be the case generally throughout the settlement, and will no doubt contribute very materially to its salubrity. The liberated Africans are seen labouring in the fields in every direction, and appear, as usual, remarkably contented and happy. From circumstances which have come under my own notice, I am inclined to form a very favourable opinion of these poor people, who are so cruelly traduced by a certain class of interested and heartless men, who would endeavour to make us believe that the slave has not a soul to be saved, any more than the hog that wallows and festers in his own mire, and that he is about as stupid

and insensible. That the intellectual capacity and the moral feeling of the liberated African black is in all respects equal to the civilized and educated individual with a skin of a different colour, and that his ignorance and dulness is merely the rough outside of the pebble, which a little polishing removes, and exhibits to view the brilliant gem within, I have, with much gratification, observed in numerous instances on board this ship.

It has been a custom with the liberated African department, for a long period, to send on board our ships of war a number of African lads recently emancipated, to be employed, as may be deemed fit, by the officer commanding. They receive no pay, are supplied with two-thirds of a rations daily, and are scantily clothed from the store of the department at Freetown. Eleven of these boys, received direct from this department, we have had on board for upwards of twelve months, and about fifteen of them for shorter periods, received from different ships on the station, which had taken them on board, like ourselves, at Sierra Leone, but a short time before. The youngest of the first eleven who came on board appeared about fourteen, the eldest nineteen years old. They were recently manumitted, of course unable to utter a word of English, and being nearly all of different tribes, were

also incapable of communing with each other—in fact, perfect specimens of young savages just escaped from the wild and desolated country which gave them birth. Soon after their arrival, they were put to different employments on board, and certainly no extraordinary degree of care was taken concerning their instruction; but for all this, two of them, who have assisted the rope-maker, have shewn themselves so very apt, that they can already manufacture as good rope as their master, who honestly acknowledges such to be the fact. Another was placed to assist the armourer, and is already a very passable blacksmith: a fourth with the carpenter, who assures us his progress is astonishing, and that he is already highly useful to him: and a fifth with the sail-maker, and his improvement is in a similar ratio. The rest have been placed to various other employments, their progression in which has been only equalled by their zeal and good humour, and by the willingness with which they set about their work. Of the others, who have been still a shorter time on board than these, six were received from his Majesty's ship Medina, before she sailed for England, who had been a considerable time on board of her, and had met with great kindness, and had received the most attentive instruction at the hands of her experienced commander. They had been taught a seaman's duty, and were

infinitely more expert and active aloft, than the white boys of the ship; and, while with us, did their duty, in every respect, with so much zeal and alacrity, that their behaviour called forth the most unqualified praise. While at Ascension, one of these boys became affected with a disease of the brain and spinal marrow, which produced paralysis of the lower extremities, and eventually carried him off. The attention of the other boys to their poor friend was most assiduous; and when the fatal event took place, they exhibited every mark of deep, unfeigned sorrow.

3d February. As it was necessary that we should communicate with our three tenders, Black Joke, Fair Rosamond, and Sea Flower, before finally leaving the station, we sailed again, this morning, to run once more along the coast, for that purpose. Touching at Cape Coast Castle, on the 14th, for information, and sailing again the same evening, we reached Accra next day, where we remained for a week, enjoying the liberal hospitality of Messrs Bannerman and Hanson, two British merchants resident there, of whose attention to us we cannot too warmly express our acknowledgment. Nor are we the only persons who have experienced kindness at the hands of these intelligent and liberal minded men; but every officer who has visited the Gold Coast, speaks with equal

warmth of the agreeable hours he was enabled to pass in their society.

21st. The natives of Accra are a shrewd, cunning, and ready witted people, and possessed, at the same time, of much of the simplicity of manners and lively disposition of those less familiar with Europeans on other parts of the coast. They are often hired by the officers of our squadron as servants, for which purpose they are found to answer better than the natives of any other part of the coast. The arts have made considerable progress among them; and their houses, although formed chiefly of clay, and thatched, are, many of them, large, commodious, airy specimens of architecture, of one, two, or three floors; and the three or four houses occupied by English merchants, are built of stone, and are in themselves castles or palaces, although erected by natives, under the superintendence of the owner. Finger rings, and other gold ornaments, are also manufactured by them, in a style of peculiar neatness and elegance, with the rudest implements; and, without the slightest instruction, they will imitate, to a nicety, any article of this description that may be sent to them. The annual vote by Parliament of £4000, for the repair of the forts on the Gold Coast, seems to have the effect of keeping them, at all events, well whitewashed; but, excepting in their

imposing appearance, and the ignorance of the usual native assailants, they are little better than useless. Each of the three towns, British, Dutch, and Danish Accra, I was given to understand, contains from two to three thousand inhabitants, the Dutch town being the smallest. The houses of the inhabitants are huddled together, close to the walls of the forts, all of which adjoin the sea beach. The country round Accra is one vast plain, about fourteen miles broad, and forty-five long, thickly studded with the immense habitations of the ants called *termites*, large peaked mounds, or rugged cones of clay, from six to twenty feet in height, giving the whole plain an appearance of one widely spreading Indian village. Trees are by no means abundant on this broad champaign, which is generally covered with prickly pear bushes, and thick low brushwood; but the cashew, tamarind, and some other trees, are here and there cultivated for their fruit.

It is seldom that boats belonging to ships at anchor in the roadstead can land at Accra, in consequence of the tremendous surf usually met with on the beach, completely exposed as it is to the heavy roll of the Atlantic. We very fortunately had fine weather, and comparatively smooth water, during almost the whole of our stay, and landed in the canoes, which are well adapted for passing a surf, dry

shod. These clumsy looking vehicles are of great length, and are paddled by ten or twelve men, who keep time to a discordant tune, bellowed and screaked by all during their exertions, managing the unwieldy bark at the same time with the greatest dexterity. The passenger's seat is in a sort of box, fixed in the bow of the canoe, where a chair is usually placed for his accommodation. By *stowing* close, the largest of them will take on shore ten or twelve passengers in this way at a time. We visited King Ankra, the Accra chief, who drank undiluted gin with a thirst which I thought unquenchable, and afterwards rode out to Danish Accra, (about three miles to the eastward of the two others, which are contiguous,) in a gig, or calash, drawn—it will hardly be believed in a Christian country, but such is the practice here—by four stout blacks, who dragged us along at a rapid pace, and seemed, by their grinning, laughing, and chattering, to enjoy the run as much as we were amused with the novelty of the conveyance—in anticipation, doubtless, of the few cut-moneys they might receive, for there could be little real pleasure, one would think, in such a recreation, under so hot a sun; but such is the custom at Accra, and "when at Rome we must do as Rome does."

After having received on board between

three and four hundred parrots, and other birds, beasts, and reptiles, for our friends in England, we took leave of the Gold Coast on the 22d February, and went in search of the Black Joke, which we supposed to be cruizing in our course, but found at Fernando Po on the 29th, having captured on the 15th, without resistance or any event worth mentioning, the Spanish schooner "Frasquita," of one hundred and fifteen tons, with two hundred and ninety slaves on board, from the river Bonny bound to Cuba. The day after capture, she departed for Sierra Leone, in charge of one of the mates of the tender, and five seamen.

To our great mortification we learnt that the Commander-in-chief, (who, having sailed from Sierra Leone, had also arrived here before us,) after a survey held on the Black Joke at sea, which declared her unfit for service, had been under the necessity of ordering her to be broken up, and that she was to proceed to Sierra Leone for that purpose; to which place we likewise have been ordered to return, for the purpose of perpetrating the final destruction of this favourite vessel—the terror of slave dealers, and scourge of the oppressors of Africa—which has done more towards putting an end to the vile traffic in slaves than all the ships on the station put together; for, besides what she was enabled to seize, by her swift sailing, previous to our arrival on this coast, of the ten vessels made

prizes during the present Commodore's stay, she alone has captured five! She is not a very old vessel, although the destructive rot of this vapid climate has made serious inroads on her constitution, which, with the late repairs she underwent at Fernando Po, we had hoped to have patched up sufficiently to make her last for the next two years, but her decay must have been more rapid than we looked for. Still it is to be regretted that she was not ordered to be so repaired as to endure while the traffic in slaves has an existence, for her very name serves as a check to it. Rotten as she is, many a slave dealer would give a greater price for her than she originally cost, were it only for the purpose of destroying almost the only object of dread in his illicit traffic. Her demolition will, therefore, be hailed as the happiest piece of intelligence that has been received at the Havannah, and wherever else the slave trade is carried on, for many years. The Africans themselves are sensible of the boon she has conferred upon so many of their countrymen; for hose liberated at Fernando Po, particularly the women, petitioned the Commodore, in the most earnest manner, not to destroy her. When they learned that he had received orders for so doing, as he was taking final leave of the place they crowded round him, and hugged and embraced him, and entreated him not to injure "poor

Black Joke;" and urged their suit with all the warmth of a grateful recollection of what their favourite had done for them and theirs. It will be remembered that several of these poor people found friends and relations in the Marinerite when taken by the Black Joke in April last.

Two "cut-down" ten-gun brigs, the Brisk and Charybdis, have recently been sent here from England, in the mistaken hope that they will answer extremely well for the suppression of the slave trade. They are no more to be compared, in point of sailing qualities, to the Black Joke, or to slave vessels generally, than they themselves were in their original state to what they are now. The Black Joke has tried rate of sailing with them, and, to speak technically, she walks round and round them in a cable's length. It is therefore evident, that they will answer very little better than any of the rest of our clumsy ships of war, for the capture of the fast-sailing American built "clippers," engaged in the slave trade. The Black Joke was herself one of this description, taken by Commodore Sir Francis Collier, in the Sybille; and it is only a similar description of vessel which can be, under present circumstances, of any effectual service in the capture of these illicit traders, instead of the heavy frigates, sloops of war, and gun brigs, hitherto employed for that purpose. In no instance is the old proverb, "set a thief

to catch a thief," more applicable, or better exemplified, than in the present. It is, therefore, much to be regretted, that the tender cannot be taken to England, thoroughly repaired, or even renewed, and sent back to the coast: but destroyed she must be, and we selected for that purpose.

2d March. Leaving Fernando Po to-day, (where, by the by, we found that Mr Chapman, a colonial officer, and both sergeants of marines, and others, had fallen victims to the climate since we were here before,) we stood towards Prince's Island, took on board a supply of wood and water, bade adieu to the "Good Queen," and wended our way towards Ascension, where we arrived on the

26th; and learned, that the crew of our tender, "Fair Rosamond," while here recently, had suffered severely from dysentery, in consequence of having been placed in quarantine at a small bay called Comfort Cove, a little to the northward of the anchorage, because part of the crew were labouring under small-pox, caught from the diseased inmates of the two slave vessels lately detained in the river Bonny, and which the medical officers of the island were reasonably afraid might be introduced among the inhabitants, many of the youngest of whom had not undergone the usual preventative ordeal. The tender, while here,

was "hove down," for the purpose of being coppered; during which operation the crew were landed at the Cove, where tents were erected for their reception. During the day, they worked on board the vessel, and landed to meals and to sleep. The air in the Cove, completely sheltered as it is from the breeze, was uncommonly dry and rarified; and the thermometer stood sometimes as high as one hundred degrees in the shade, while on board the tender, where the south-east trade wind blew with uncommon freshness, it never exceeded eighty-two. As the vessel was barely three quarters of a mile from the shore, the dysentery, I think, may be attributed principally to this great difference of temperature, and to the frequent and sudden vicissitudes daily taking place during their visits to and from the vessel. Some were inclined to consider the water of the island, (which, being principally obtained from the scanty showers that occasionally fall, and kept in tanks, is none of the best,) as the sole cause of the disease; but I am fully convinced, that this water has no really deleterious property, and could not, without more powerful concomitants—such as vicissitudes of temperature, an unusually dry atmosphere, and, as in the instance of the tender's crew, a sudden change of diet, from a scanty allowance of salt provisions, to an abundant supply of

fish, turtle, and vegetables,—produce so much violent disturbance in the alimentary canal. Twenty-five of the tender's crew, of forty-five men, were seized with the disease; but, although many of the cases assumed a most serious complexion, yet all recovered under the judicious care of Mr Macleroy, the assistant surgeon in charge.

Sierra Leone, 29th April. On our arrival here to-day, we found that our last prize, the Frasquita, had made a passage from the place of capture to this colony in three weeks; but that, although it occupied so brief a space of time, the poor slaves had suffered in a frightful manner, from the ravages of small-pox and dysentery, fifty of them, during that short period, having fallen victims to these diseases, and ten soon after their arrival at the colony!

We found here also the Spanish brig Segunda Teresa, captured by his Majesty's brig Pelorus, on the 19th March, off Cape St Paul's, with four hundred and sixty slaves on board, bound from Whydah to Havanna. Her passage to this place also occupied three weeks, during which, only ten of the slaves died. It has been universally remarked, that the slaves sent from the river Bonny are much more debilitated, unhealthy, and subject to disease, than those from the other parts of the coast; but I have never heard any reason assigned for so melan-

choly a fact, which, however, will serve to account for the great difference of mortality on board the two vessels.

After the mortifying operation of destroying the Black Joke, which was done by fire, we sailed, on the 9th of May, for the river Gambia, on a requisition from the Governor of Sierra Leone, that we should afford convoy to a small schooner, hired for the purpose of carrying a number of Africans, recently emancipated from the two vessels just mentioned, to our settlement there, for the purpose of location. We arrived, with her in company, on the 29th. There were upwards of one hundred and thirty of these poor wretches put on board the vessel, and nothing could exceed their miserable plight, or the distressing state in which I found them, on paying a visit to the sick during the passage up. No slave vessel that I have ever seen or heard of, with her unhappy inmates just kidnapped and sent on board from any of the numerous slave marts on this extensive coast, for the purposes of expatriation, could possibly be in a more filthy state, or her miserable captives in a more wretched and pitiable condition. Dysentery and ophthalmia were making heavy inroads among them, from the filth and crowding, and the distressing effects of their accumulated and long-continued miseries. The dysenteric patients were lying on the bare deck,

some of them "*in articulo mortis*," without a covering; for, not a bed or a sheet was in the vessel for their use, and seven of them died on the passage. This may be understood to be emancipation, but, at all events, such an exemplification of it does not afford its objects any very speedy relief from their distresses.

30th May. The island of St Mary's, upon which the town of Bathurst is situated, on the south bank of the entrance to the river Gambia, is a complete flat, and consists almost wholly of loose sand, into which you plunge almost to the ancles at every step, with, as may be supposed in such a soil, hardly any vegetation; but beyond St Mary's, the country, which is extremely low on both sides of the river, appears to be in the highest degree rich and luxuriant. On Barra Point, the jutting bank of the river directly opposite to Bathurst Town, —the scene of the late squabble with the natives, in which our sailors and troops behaved, as usual, so well, and during which not a few valuable lives were lost, for no very satisfactory reason that I have heard of—they are at present erecting a fort for the better security of the ceded territory. The river here is two miles and three quarters broad; its stream very rapid, and of a muddy clay colour.

The town of Bathurst has a lively pleasing appearance. The houses of the Europeans are

very airy, and of rather tasteful construction, and (whether for the sake of effect on the natives, preservation of the material, or coolness, does not appear,) are, like all other buildings of Europeans on the coast, daubed with a plentiful coating of whitewash. The liberated African and native houses in the town are generally circular, and formed of wicker work, with circular roofs, thatched and peaked, so that they closely resemble bee-hives on a large scale. They are enclosed in numbers together, within a hedge eight or ten feet high, of the same basket-work material of which their walls are composed. During our stay here, the average height of the thermometer was much below what we had ever found it on any other part of the coast, the minimum being 71.00, maximum 76.00, with hazy weather, and a very heavy night dew. This change of temperature was indescribably grateful to our feelings.

31st May, 1832. To-day, after a shorter stay than was anticipated, we took our final departure from the coast of Africa for England, and after touching again at St Jago, and at St Michael's, arrived at Spithead on the 26th July, 1832, having, out of a complement of three hundred men, lost only ten by disease, including those who died on board our tenders, during a stay of twenty months in that unhealthy region.

LIST OF VESSELS engaged in the SLAVE TRADE, captured

Name of the vessel.	Date of capture.	Under what colours.	Where captured.	From what part.	Where b
Jules	Jan. 6	Netherland	Bar of River Calebar	Old Calebar	St Tho
La Jeune Eugenie	Do.	Do.	Do.	Do.	Martini
Bella Eliza	Jan. 7	Brazilian	3° 13′ N. 4° 41′ E.	Lagos River	Bahia
Vingador	Jan. 15	Portuguese	12° 17′ N. 16° 54′ W.	Town of Cacheo off the River Cacheo	Brazil
Aurelia	15	Do.	12° 17′ N. 16° 54′ W.	Town of Cacheo off the River Cacheo	St Jago
El Almirante	Feb. 1	Spanish	3° 50′ N. 4° 25′ E.	Lagos River	Havanna
Uniao	6	Brazilian	2° 48′ N. 5° 12′ E.	Do.	Bahia
Adeline	9	Netherland	Fernando Po.	St Thomas	Brasse
Mensageira	15	Brazilian	Bar of the R. Bonny	River Bonny	Rio de Janeiro
Andorinha	19	Do.	At Lagos	Lagos River	Bahia
Donna Barbara	21	Do.	3° 2′ N. 4° 26′ E	Do.	Havanna
Hirondelle	26	Netherland	Entrance of R. Calebar	Akassato-ra River	St Eustatiu
Carolina	March 6	Brazilian	5° 11′ N. 4° 53′ E.	Lagos River	Bahia
Hossè	23	Portuguese	6° N. 2° 35′ E.	Whydah	Do.
Panchita	April 29	Spanish	5° 58′ N. 5° 02′ E.	New Ca-lebar R.	Havanna
Ceres	Aug. 6	Brazilian	1° 30′ N. 9° 16′ E.	R. Came-roons	Rio de Janeiro
Emelia	16	Do.	5° 05′ N. 5° 15′ E.	River Lagos	Bahia.
Clarita	17	Spanish	0° 25′ 5″ N. 8° 54′ 9″ E.	River Bonny	Havanna
Christina	October	Do.	1° 28′ N. 6° 7′ E.	River Brasse	Do.
Temtadora	Nov. 4	Brazilian	5° 17′ N. 4° 19′ E.	River Lagos	Bahia
Amelia	Dec. 9	Do.	5° 35′ N. 4° 19′ E.	Whydah	Do.

British Squadron employed on the Western Coast of Africa, in the year 1829.

How rigged.	Number of slaves when captured.	Length of passage to S. Leone.	No. of deaths on the passage.	By what vessel taken.	Remarks.
		Days.			
Brig	220	27	13	Boats of H. M. S. Eden.	144 men, 76 women, emancipated.
Schooner	50	31	4	Cornelia, tender to Eden.	18 men, 32 women emancipated.
Do.	232			Medina.	Vessel 120 tons burden; 75 men, 22 women, 118 children, emancipated.
Brig	223	6	2	Primrose	115 men, 51 women, 54 children, emancipated.
Galliot	38	6	None	Do.	13 men, 6 women, 10 children, emancipated.
Brig	466	34	39	Black Joke	Vessel 350 tons burden; 11 killed or missing in the gallant action. The 39 deaths include all who died previous to adjudication; 267 men, 77 women, 132 children, emancipated.
Brigantine	405	22	33	Sybille	93 men, 153 women, 120 children, emancipated.
Schooner	Cargo of goods			Eden	
Do.	353		43	Cornelia	244 emancipated. Besides the deaths on the passage, 66 died after arrival at Sierra Leone.
Brig	Cargo of goods	23		Sybille	
Schooner	357	21	21	Andorinha	86 men, 129 women, 136 children, emancipated.
Do.	112		5	Eden	18 died after arrival at Sierra Leone; 89 emancipated.
Brigantine	420	21	18	Black Joke	3 deaths after arrival; 64 men, 186 women, 149 children emancipated.
Do.	188	44	16	Sybille	Vessel 250 tons; 166 emancipated.
Schooner	292	19	10	Do.	Vessel 170 tons; 259 emancipated; 23 deaths after arrival.
Do.	279	34	100	Plumper	50 deaths after arrival; 128 emancipated.
Do.	488	27	51	Dallas tender to Sybille	Vessel 150 tons; 435 emancipated; 2 deaths after arrival.
Do.	261	23	35	Medina	201 emancipated.
Brigantine	348			Black Joke	
Schooner	451			Dallas	
Brigantine	187			Sybille and Atholl	Vessel 175 tons.

LIST OF VESSELS engaged in the SLAVE TRADE, captured by the
his Majesty's Ship Dryad's arrival on

Name of the Vessel.	Date of capture.	Under what colours.	Where captured.	From what part.	Where bound.
Dos Amigos	1830 Nov. 8	Spanish	Off Cameroons	R. Cameroons	Havanna
Nympha	Nov. 24	Spanish	Off Rio Pongos	Rio Pongos	Boa Vista
Maria	Dec. 25	Spanish	Off R. Gallinas	River Gallinas	Havanna
Primeira	1831 Feb. 22	Do.	Off Cape Mount	Do.	Do.
El Marinerito	April 26	Do.	Off S.E. point of Fernando Po	Old Calebar	Do.
Potosi	July 20	Do.	4° 53′ N 4° 26′ E	Lagos	Do.
Regulo	Sept. 10	Do.	In the R. Bonny	River Bonny	Cuba
Rapido	Do.	Do.	Do.	Do.	Do.
Frasquita	1832 Feb. 15	Do.	3° 30′ N 7° 28′ E	Do.	Do.
Segunda Teresa	March 19	Do.	Off Cape St Pauls	Whydah	Havanna

itish Squadron on the Western Coast of Africa, between the periods of d departure from that station.

w rigged.	No. of slaves when captured	Length of passage to S. Leone.	No. of deaths on the passage.	By what vessel taken.	Remarks.
		Days.			
gantine		27		Black Joke	Had 450 slaves on board; but running up the River Cameroons, was enabled to land them before capture.
chooner	169	4		Boats of the Conflict	Taken after a smart fight, in which some of the Spaniards were killed, and several of the Conflict's crew, as well as of the slaves, wounded.
igantine	504	6		Plumper	
chooner of 130 tons	311	8	1	Black Joke tender to Dryad	111 men, 45 women, 98 boys, 53 girls, 4 infants; 3 killed by shot from the Tender; height of slave deck 2 feet 2 inches.
rig of 303 ts.	496	24	22	Do.	Several slaves accidentally killed in the action; 26 died soon after from fright; 107 landed at Fernando Po sick from terror, crowding, and privations; 60 of whom died in a few weeks, either there or on their passage up to S. Leone.
hooner	191	23	7	Fair Rosamond, tender to Dryad	2 deaths after arrival.
rig 175 tons Spanish admeasurement	204	27	24	Fair Rosamond and Black Joke	24 died on passage; 10 missing.
Brig 147 tons Spanish	2	27			A vast number of slaves thrown overboard during the chase; 150 of whom were drowned.
Schooner 115 tons	290	21	50	Black Joke	The deaths arose from small-pox and dysentery; 10 more died after their arrival.
Brig 175 tons	460	21	10	Pelorus	The deaths arose from small-pox and dysentery.

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